

Lyrics of the Fields.

Samuel Ishmyre Davis.

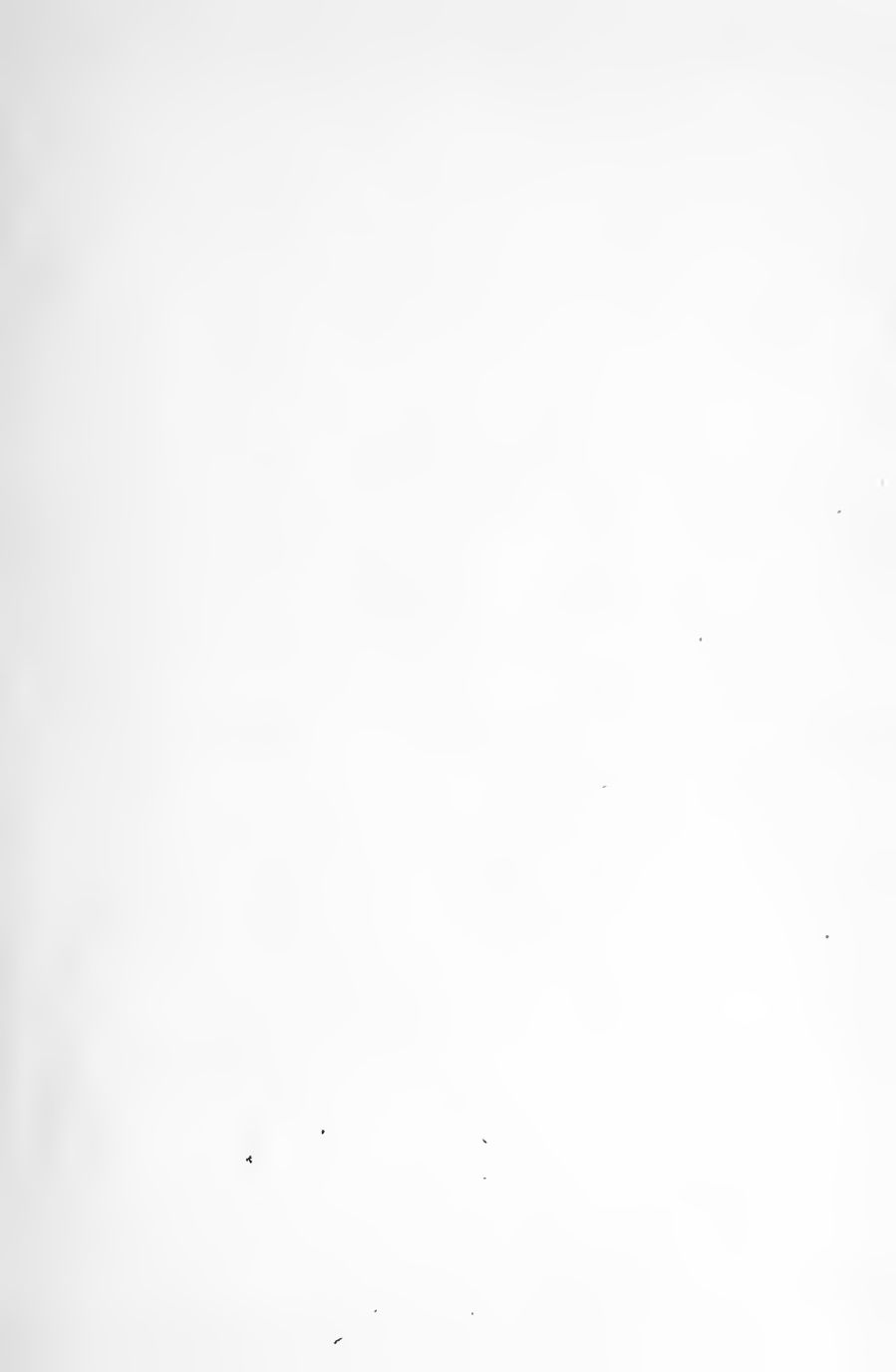


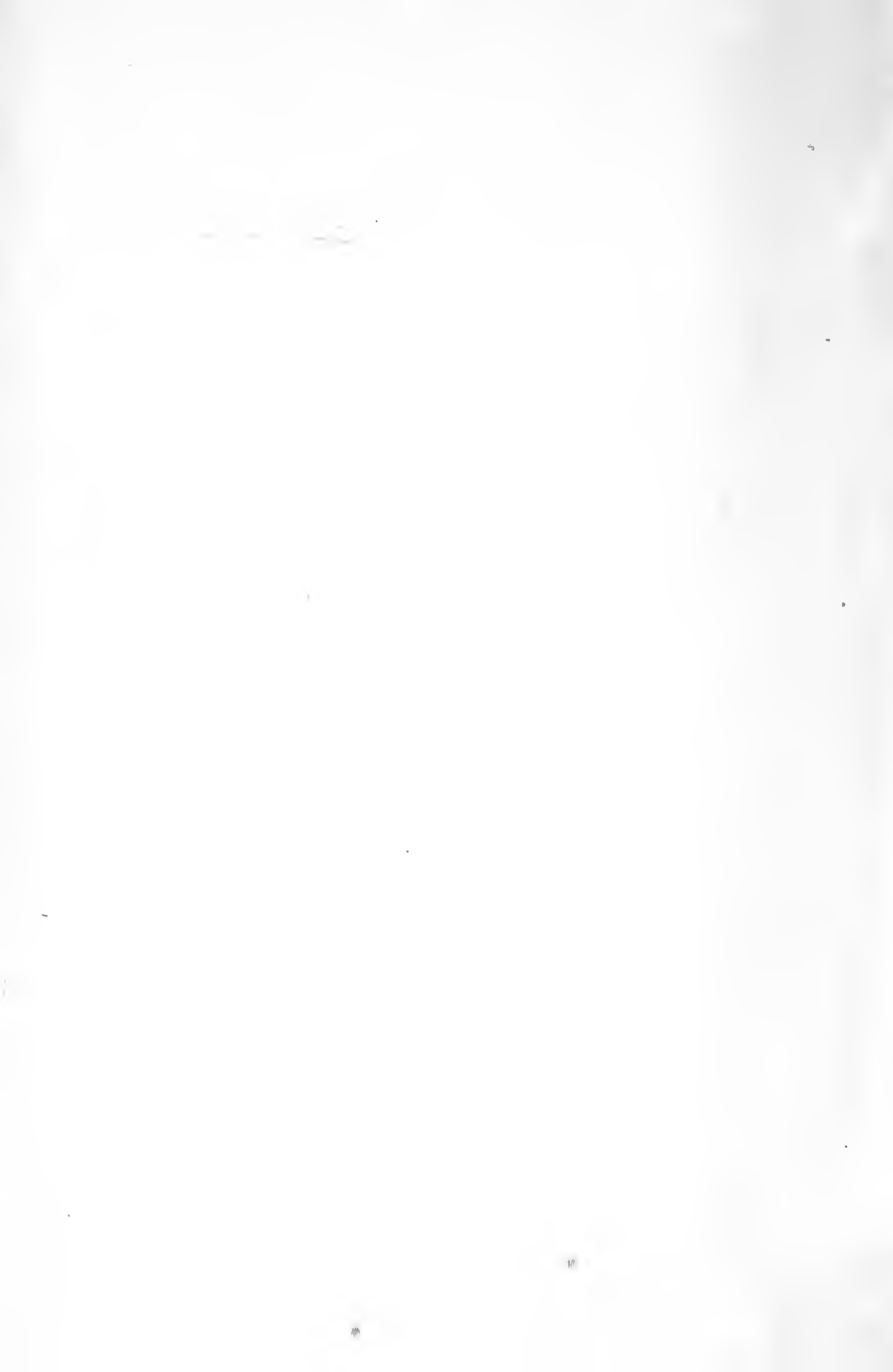
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Lyrics of the Fields.

But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee;
and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee.

—*Job xii. 7, 8.*

By
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"Biographical Sketches of Nine Deacons,"

"The Old Parish," etc.,



WILKES-BARRE, PA.
R. BAUR & SON, PRINTERS AND BINDERS.

[1909]

PS3507
A76L9
1909

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To
The Dear Memory
of
My Brother,
Benjamin Davis.



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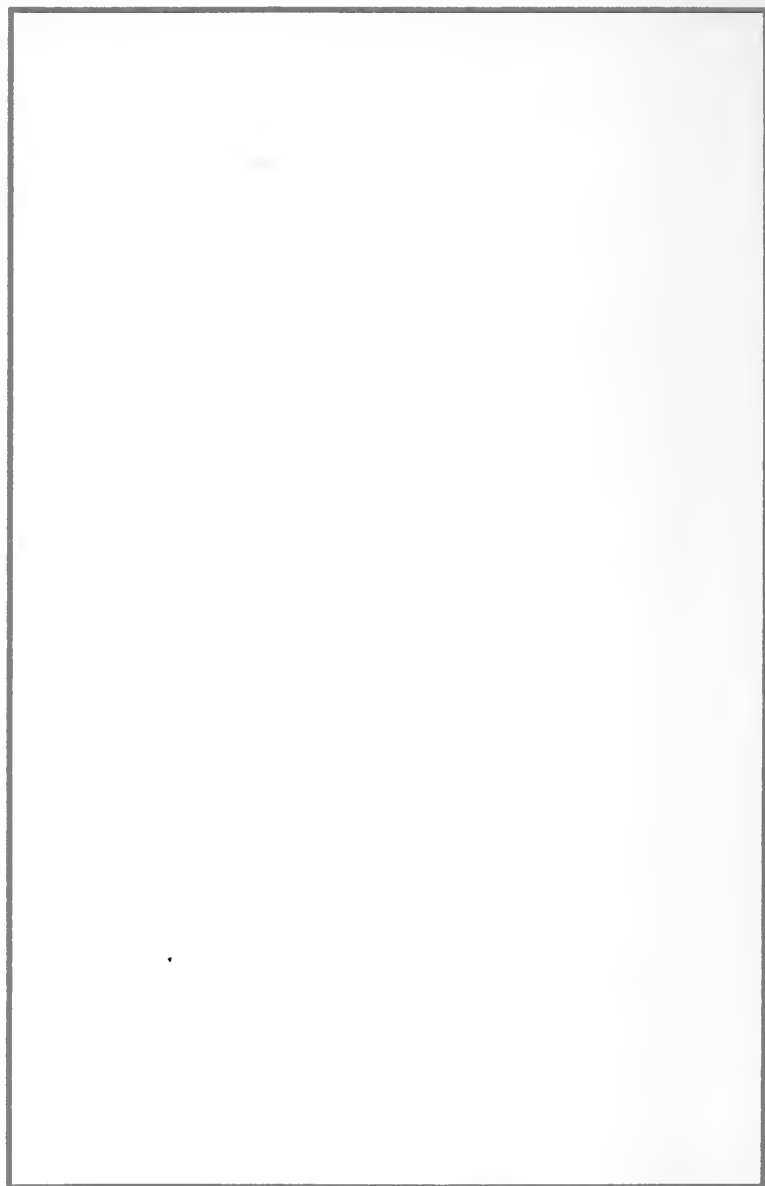
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Lyrics of the Fields.



Holy Fields.

THIS fern-clad combe how oft we scoured,
My dog and I, for wayward sheep!
With agile limbs we bounded on,
Nor did we deem these paths so steep;
As down this vale by moorland breeze
Are borne the bleats of lambs and ewes,
These scenes of boyhood, with delight,
My manhood's heart this day reviews.

Ah, little brook! how sweet thy song—
The song I loved so long ago!
As on thy banks I blithely roamed,
And watched thy steady seaward flow;
I mind the time, the halcyon hours
When brother, sister, and myself,
Robbed clean thy pools of speckled trout,
And carried home the slippery pelf.

On yonder side, the hazel-grove
Is waving in the autumn light,
With russet leaves and toothsome nuts
The turfy ground is covered bright;
Around the fireplace, winter nights,
When listening to a merry tale,
These hazel-trees with nuts so brown
Our household circle did regale.

These are the fields I helped to plow
And harrow for potato rows,
I pulled the weeds that choked the vines,
I scared away the thievish crows;

Lyrics of the Fields.

This is the hedge, with primrose clad,
Where oft I ate the plowboy's fare,
While horses rested from their toil,
And munched the grass without a care.

With heart as merry as the morn,
I drove my lusty team afield,
With songs I did long hours beguile,
As hands the heavy plow did wield;
At milking-time I heard the maid
In honeyed tones call home the kine,
Far sweeter to my ear her voice
Than to my lips the choicest wine.

These well-kept homes below the moor—
Abodes of health and perfect peace,
These acres broad where graze the flocks,
And ponds where swim the fussy geese;
These winding lanes through ferns and furze—
Haunts of the rabbit and the hare,
Are known to me since early youth,
And made for me a world most fair.

Yea, holy fields these are to me,
Where Nature first my heart did woo,
And humbly kneeling at her shrine,
I gave to her my fealty true;
Benignant Nature! full my soul
Of love ineffable to thee,
No pompous worship dost thou ask,
But absolute simplicity!

At Washington's Grave.

WASHINGTON! There is but one Washington,
The warrior-patriot nonpareil!
Whose strategy the conquest won,
And cast o'er men the glamour of a spell;
His dust is lulled to an immortal sleep
By the Potomac's lyric-lilt:
I bare my brow in reverence deep—
Because his deathless fame on worth is built.

Abraham Lincoln.

LINCOLN! in a log cabin born,
Left motherless at tender age of nine,
Yet sterling virtues did adorn
His struggling youth, and made his manhood fine;
From its beginning to its close,
His life was toilsome, simple, honest, grand,
From poverty he nobly rose
To fill the greatest office in the land.

Lincoln! the Moses of the West,
Emancipator of the Negro slave,
By God was raised, with wisdom blest,
The Union of his native land to save;
He, like the Hebrew, was cut down
Just as the Land of Freedom loomed in sight:
To-day he wears a martyr's crown,
And lives in every breast that loves the Right.

Nostalgia.

IN my heart there is longing
For scenes far away—
In the land of my schooldays,
Where happiness lay;
More intense grows the feeling
When down comes the night,
And I muse in my cottage,
My logs burning bright.

Very dense lies the darkness
Outside my low door,
In it crawls through each crevice,
And fights for the floor;
But the glow on my hearthstone
Illumines the room,
And the light of past pleasures
Beats backward my gloom.

How the wind in the tree-tops
Capriciously roars!
Like the sound of wild billows
On far-away shores!
Over stubble and forest
It comes and it goes,
But the trees are my sentries
And guardians from foes.

Bleak and bare are the uplands
Where ripened the grain,
Cold and damp are the meadows
With late-autumn rain;

Lyrics of the Fields.

All my sheep have been folded,
My two faithful dogs
On the hearth are reclining,
Before the bright logs.

In my dream, over yonder
A farmstead I see,
Ah, it seems just as lovely
As ever to me!
It was there, while a student
In that ancient seat,
That I loved a blithe lassie—
Transcendently sweet.

On the marge of the river,
Not far from the sea,
There are stretching and stretching
Rich acres of lea;
In the meadows, all summer,
The wild daisies gleam,
Oh, the landscape in beauty
Eclipses a dream!

From the fields, looking northward,
The town we espy,
On the face of the waters
Floats seaward its cry;
Past these fields, where contentment
Forever abides,
Up and down the smooth river
Ships glide with the tides.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Over there by the orchard,
Where stood the hay mows,
In the soft, autumn twilight,
My maid milked the cows;
There we talked of the future,
Of love in a cot,
Of the bright, happy prospects
Attending our lot.

Oft we walked in the meadows
At dying of day,
We inhaled the aroma
Of newly-mown hay;
And we strolled by the river
On summer nights fine,
When the breezes were freighted
With tang of the brine.

We beheld the slow sailboats
Pass down to the bay,
In the mellow moon-radiance
They vanished away;
From afar songs of sailors,
Through moon-gilded mist,
By the night-winds were wafted
To our sylvan tryst.

Ay, we strolled by the River—
The River of Life,
And I heard in the valley
An ominous strife!

Lyrics of the Fields.

'Twas the hour when the currents
Of life are withdrawn,
And the tides reach the ocean,
At breaking of dawn.

O my meads! and my mountains!
My sad sapphire sea!
She has vanished forever
From you and from me!
Do you miss her fair presence?
Her voice and her smile?
Does her spirit e'er visit
The old rustic stile?

What! the dawn in my cottage!
My hearthstone so cold!
Come, my dogs, my companions,
Let's off to the fold!
Hail to thee, gladsome morning,
The bringer of care!
Come, my dogs, constant comrades,
Away with despair!

Rabboni.

THE martyred Syrian Teacher still keeps school,
Throughout the world He sends His Catalogue;
The nations memorize His Golden Rule,
And I adore Him as my Pedagogue.

Susie.

TO-DAY I knelt at Susie's grave,
Poor child! she had her simple wish:
To sleep, lulled by the river's swish,
Beside the shore the billows lave.

I could not check the flow of tears,
Nor close the flood-gates of the heart;
For Susie's life had played a part
In my own life in other years.

"Unfortunately born," we said,
As we beheld her on the road,
Bent, e'en at twelve, beneath her load
Of bairnies similarly bred.

That was Susie's task—her life-work:
Nursing her parents' later brood;
Going without sufficient food,
Yet never was she known to shirk.

We knew her father as—"Old Tim,"
Uncouth and boorish sort of man,
Toiling as 'twere beneath a ban,
With darksome frown and visage grim.

His strength he sold for paltry wage,
By smarter men he was decoyed,
By drink his manhood was destroyed,
His wedded life was blotted page.

Lyrics of the Fields.

And then—the mother of the child!
The strain of Indian blood, they said,
Accounted for the life she led,
Toilsome, yet dissolute and wild.

But not alone the ruthless rush
Of alien blood that wrought disgrace,
The lepers of a greater race
Did help her womanhood to crush.

Yet Susie was of gentle mold,
Despite her parents' wanton ways,
To nursing brats she gave her days,
Without a thought of praise or gold.

In hut where faith met naught but scorn,
And gentleness—its lethal doom,
Her virtues opened into bloom,
A lily by the prickly thorn.

Her form has left the village street,
We miss her voice, her pensive smile,
She does no more wee brats beguile,
Nor trudge along with weary feet.

By dread disease poor Susie fell,
At last her pain forever ceased;
They buried her without a priest
To pray, and say that all was well.

But when the plague had spent its force,
We gathered at the village shrine,
Submitted to the Will Divine,
And Susie's life we did endorse.

A heroine is Susie now
 Regarded by her former mates,
 The heroism that never prates,
Nor even takes a formal vow.

Poor Susie slumbers by the tide,
 Not knowing in our hearts she lives;
 To kindly deeds incentive gives,
As days and seasons swiftly glide.

The Place of the Altar.

IN this sacred spot, to the Unknown Time
 An altar I raised in the days of old,
A primitive shrine, 'mid the moorland ferns—
 A huge boulder white, partly stained with mold.

My prayers no one heard but the mountain winds,
 And God, Who presides o'er the Unknown Time;
I dreamed of life's years—just three-score-and-ten,
 Sincerely I prayed for their gifts sublime.

I wrote on the stone the requests of youth,
 Away they are worn by the sun and rain;
The years of the future, I counted then,
 To-day are behind, with their loss and gain.

For self overmuch were my prayers, I trow,
 My God I invoked for sublunar bliss,
But wise Unknown Time freely gave his boons,
 In love he withheld what I asked amiss.

Oh, sweet were the years of the Lord's right hand!
 Oh, sweet were the dreams and the prayers of prime!
Though three-score-and-ten, at this altar rude
 I still praise the God of the Unknown Time.

Summer Clouds.

SUMMER clouds! Summer clouds!
Clouds of the breaking east,
Clouds of blossoming Love,
Ye intrepidly move
As to a merry feast;
To his banqueting halls,
In the auroral skies,
Love, in the morning, calls
Blest youths with blinded eyes.
Beautiful summer clouds!

Summer clouds! Summer clouds!
Clouds of the raving north,
Clouds of strenuous Strife,
To the battle of life
Ye career wildly forth;
Panoplied for the fray,
Strife shrieks to manhood bold
To wage, in modern way,
The bitter warfare old.
Thunderous summer clouds!

Summer clouds! Summer clouds!
Clouds of the sunny south,
Clouds of auspicious Peace,
Ye cause the crops' increase,
Ye save the earth from drouth;
To his domain unlost
Peace bids the human race
Return, at any cost,
And find its rightful place.
Bountiful summer clouds!

Summer clouds! Summer clouds!
Clouds of the gorgeous west,
Clouds of sheltering Home,
Though harbingers of gloam,
Perchance ye are the best;
Sharp swords are beat to shares,
Fair fought and won the fight,
Love's heart is free from cares
In occidental light.
Thankworthy summer clouds!

Olivia.

LITTLE girl, does the moon, as of yore,
Shimmer through maple-trees in the yard?
Is the ghostly white birch showing more
Silver sheen? Is the pine yet on guard?
Do you sit on the porch in deep thought,
When the moon is just over the hill,
When the deeds of the day are all wrought,
And the streets of the village are still?

Nil Desperandum.

TO the heights, O my soul! to the heights,
Where the sunshine is bright all day long,
Leave the lowland miasmal that blights,
Bid adieu to depression—be strong;
Take the road to the uplands of God,
Learn to love, to forgive, and to toil:
Up the heights, O my soul! do thou plod,
All thy foes thou wilt finally foil.

Epitaph.

LAY me to sleep, without a moan,
Beneath the yews beside the wall,
And on a rustic slab of stone
Engrave the words of brother Paul:
"I have fought a good fight,
I have finished my course,
I have kept the faith."

Yale University.

OH, the weird west wind, oh, the weird west wind
Was a-wooing me in my island-nest;
Oh, the night-wind wooed with caresses blind,
And the dawn-breeze, too, was a glib-tongued guest.
Oh, the weird west wind with the day arose,
Round my nest arose till it blew a gale;
O'er the sea it soughed at the day's calm close—
Oh, the weird west wind was the call of Yale!

Father.

THOU art asleep, kind parent, with the dead,
Where mystic music soothing balm distills;
Thou hast no more the final foe to dread,
And free art thou from all terrestrial ills.

The boon of sleep, the solemn sleep of death,
Thou hast well earned through many years of toil;
Thou didst surrender bravely every breath
To the laborious tillage of the soil.

Lyrics of the Fields.

In greener glades the birds of summer sing,
More trees and flowers unfurl their leaves and bloom,
And heavier harvests grateful hillsides bring
For toil of hands now folded in the tomb.

The parish learned the potency of love
In thy firm faith that stood the test when tried:
Thou didst demonstrate that the Lord above
In common cares of life is glorified.

Thy mundane tasks are terminated now,
The blush of dawn athwart the orient skies
Will wake thee not the fields to sow or plow,
Nor banish slumber from thy death-closed eyes.

Thou dost not hear the call of Sabbath bells,
Thy seat is vacant in the holy place;
Thou viewest not earth-valleys fair and fells,
Nor dost thou in the Book God's wisdom trace.

The tranquil twilight of thy seventieth year
Brought manumission to thy vital spark,
The Master-Toiler's welcome hand was near,
His countenance illumed for thee the dark!

The Flower-Girl.

“POSIES, please?” with hesitation,
From a modest maiden came,
Just outside the Union Station,
“Isla” was her pretty name;
Late-March morn was vengeance wreaking
On an early Easter-tide,
And belated blasts were shrieking
Through the alleys of West Side.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Thrown across her shapely shoulders
Was a ragged, reddish shawl,
Torn her shoes, and to beholders
Showed her toes so shy and small;
Her green frock was patched and faded,
Kept in place by many a pin,
But her face, by dark locks shaded,
Was angelic, pale, and thin.

Sweet her voice, yet sad and tragic,
Like the music of a stream
Thwarted, when the wondrous magic
Of the spring denies its dream;
“Will you, please, sir, buy some posies?
They are just five cents a bunch,
Lilies, violets, and roses,
Mother sadly needs a lunch.”

“Child, excuse me, if I bother,
Are you living very far?
What’s the matter with your mother?
Tell me, lass, how old you are?”
“Mother’s ill, and cannot rally,
We are living on a flat,
Number thirty, Pleasant Alley,
I am twelve, but what of that?”

“Keep your posies, my sweet girlie,
Place them in your mother’s room,
Do you watch there late and early?
Do you dread the day of doom?
You are faint from inanition,
Give this to your mother true,
With it buy, with her permission,
Food, and shoes, a dress or two.”

"Oh! sir, you must see my mother,
If you want to be so kind,
We have promised, sir, each other
The commands of God to mind;
In the country we were living,
Till my father died last year,
Then my mother thought of giving
Jim and me a chance up here.

"Jimmy, sir, was selling papers,
Mother did some washing 'round,
Jimmy too would cut such capers,
If some days good luck he'd found;
Once he bought for me a locket,
Had my name graved on the gold,
That I keep, sir, in my pocket,
I shall wear it when I'm old.

"One night Jimmy was run over
By a monster motor-car,
For awhile he did recover,
And the wound began to scar;
Then, poor boy! he seemed to languish
On his spotless little bed,
Oh! our hearts were filled with anguish
When the doctor shook his head.

"Jesus took, despite our wailing,
The white soul of brother Jim,
Mother since, sir, has been ailing,
And she wants to go to him;
There's a God, she says, of pity,
There's a land that's always green,
So much nicer than this city,
And the wind is not so keen."

When they got to number thirty,
Isla's mother had gone home,
Where there are no alleys dirty,
And where orphans cease to roam;
Where poor widows know no famine,
And unknown are filth and wrong,
Where the hapless waif and gamin
Are not told to move along.

"Child, be mine!—at rest thy mother!"

"Oh! sir, are you Jesus Christ?"

"No, sweet one! naught but a brother
To the Lord Who was despised!"

Ichabod.

I.

BEYOND the flimsy rustic bridge of birch,
Beneath the tangled shrubbery I search
And find the ruins of a peasant's cot,
Who reared two sons in this sequestered spot.
Of him the parish annals mention this:
"The tilth of soil and soul brought him bland bliss.
He found the fount of good that never dloys—
His earnings gave to educate his boys.
'Twas the ambition of the toiler hard
To be the father of a learned bard,
To give—regarding it his God's command—
A son to some benighted, heathen land.
His wish was granted: one in letters shone,
The other son attained a martyr's throne."

II.

For sons and parents parish bells have tolled,
Luxuriant ivy hides the ruins old.
The merry mother of the days gone by
Her knitting needles nevermore does ply;
The oaken rafters lie around decayed,
The ingle nook e'en with the ground is laid;
Debris and brush the hearthstone cover o'er,
A-leaning is the lintel of the door.
Brambles and bracken thrive where children sweet
Ran forth at close of day their sire to greet.
The forest has the garden plot redeemed,
And groundsel grows where roses bloomed and beamed.
At night the owls come to these oaks to hoot,
And in these thickets foxes eat their loot.
Wild Nature revels in this rough ravine,
And man but seldom comes upon the scene.
Departed is the glory of the cot,
Its ruins preach man's transitory lot.
Cherubic childhood's joys, maternal mirth,
A father's faith,—have fled this spot of earth;
Dark, devastating Death has thrown a pall
Of dreary desolation over all;
And, in the language of the race of God,
I carve upon the threshold—"Ichabod."

III.

But do the tiny particles of rain
That fall in desert places fall in vain,
Are they less honored than their brother-drops
That in the fertile valleys crown the crops?
Each little drop, where'er its lot is cast,
Performs its work, and finds the sea at last.

The river still flows past the ruins old,
And still the peasant's story is retold.
This tale of toil the parish youths inspires,
It kindles in their breasts ambition's fires.
The glory has, 'tis true, left this abode,
But is not dead,—has only changed its mode.
In truth, immortal is the race of man,
Naught can irreparably mar God's plan.
Yes, still the brook meanders to the sea,
As I sit thinking of eternity!

The Lovelorn Lass.

I AM in love with thee, O Death!
I want to be thy branded bride,
Oh, let me lie by thy cold side!
Since virtue's gone, and faith is fled,
I might as well be dead! dead! dead!
Great Bridegroom, take my bitter breath!

Birds of the Air.

O H! come, sweet songsters of the air,
Ensnounce yourselves around my roof,
I wish to fraternize with you,
It breaks my heart to live aloof;
I greatly love your twitter gay,
The winter days would be so long
Without you, birds. Come, take these crumbs,
And soothe my guilty soul with song.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Let me confess to you my crime,
Oh! will you to my tale give heed?
It was a winter day, like this,
When I performed the dreadful deed;
With a malevolent design,
The birds I lured with barley grains,
And then, in a bloodthirsty mood,
I cowardly blew off their brains.

There lay the innocents—all dead!
Green linnet, sparrow, robin, wren,
The victims of my boyish sport,
I valued not your friendship then;
Do you detect on me blood-stains?
And is it why you shun me so?
Can you forgive the deed I wrought
On your own kin so long ago?

As I approach you in the fields
On a May morning bright and bland,
I seem to hear you cruelly cry,
“A bloody-bloody-bloody-hand;”
The leaves and flowers shrink from my touch,
Their confidence I cannot win,
The stars withhold their secrets deep:
Have mercy, birds! forgive my sin!

Ah, good! I thought you'd come to stay,
I understand your dulcet croon,
You have forgiven my heinous sin,
O birds! what a benignant boon!

Your matins will my spirit cheer,
You'll join me in my vespers sad:
'Tis then I think me of the dead
Asleep in sepulchres snow-clad!

Bright birds, precarious too your life,
Are you forlorn when scarce are joys?
Does woe weigh down your hearts when Death
Your comrades of the air destroys?
Do you sleep warm these brumal nights?
When hoarfrost glistens on your breasts,
Do you have dreams of vernal days?
Of callow broods in cozy nests?

Henceforth we shall be loyal friends,
I harbor in my heart no guile,
You may confide in me whene'er
I walk in lane or rest on stile;
I will molest you nevermore,
From your white hearts dismiss all fears,
Between and o'er us, oh, may God
Keep watch and ward through all the years!

When summer comes to vales and hills,
You'll quit my hospitable eaves,
Fair days need not our hearts estrange,
Forget me not when woods have leaves;
When gladsome days are gone again,
And forests are without a roof,
Come home to me, my blameless birds,
There will not be for you reproof.

A Prayer.

GIVE me a cottage on a hill,
Where I may watch the sun arise;
There let my soul drink in its fill
Of truths sublime, eterne, and wise.

The birds may build around my roof,
And sing to me of Heaven's care;
I'll have no creature keep aloof,
They'll welcome be to lowly fare.

Beside my door will flowers upspring,
And fragrant make the summer breeze,
Their nectar honey me will bring,
Harvested by the busy bees.

There shall we dwell, my bride and I,
Enraptured with the joys of life,
Though tempests roar, and wild winds cry,
Free we shall be from mundane strife.

O God! vouchsafe to me this prayer,
Deny it not, nor part withhold.
These homely joys be mine to share,
Keep Thou me ever in Thy fold.



The Rosebud.

I HAVE a little story
To tell you all, to-night,
Of a bewitching baby,
Born with the morning light;
His cheeks are full of dimples,
His lips are lovely red,
His breath is aromatic,
Now lying in his bed.

What do you think, my children,
We call this little man?
We cannot help but love him,
And hug him all we can;
He has not long to tarry,
His sweetness cannot stay,
And that is why he's loving,
And fragrant all the day.

He whispers to us early,
He whispers to us late,
"Be always sweet and pleasant,
And never mind the great;"
Now guess his name, my darlings,
Or I must tell you soon,
"His name is—Baby Rosebud,
He comes in month of June."

An Invocation.

GOD of the vast immensities of space,
Of vanished ages, countless as the dews,
Of the eternities before the race!—
Enlarge and universalize my views.

Sister.

WEE sister Margaret wert the first
To leave our fireside for the lovely land,
Just as thy tender beauty burst
In smiles angelic on this earthly strand;
Thy tiny figure led the way,
Our childhood's heaven was that—"where Margaret lives,
Where little children have their play,
And smile at Jesus for the joy He gives."

Sweet sister, thou wert not forgot
In those dark days that followed thy demise,
Oft mother took us to the spot
And told us, "Here our darling Margaret lies;"
And frequently thy baby dress,
So sacredly preserved throughout the years,
We saw her tenderly caress,
Bestaining it the while with precious tears.

We thought thee present in our games,
In all our feuds our arbitress wert thou,
And in our household list of names
We wrote thine, Margaret; and we do it now;
With our own growth thou hast kept pace,
Although thy grave is still a tiny one;
Thou, too, hast grown in Christly grace
In that celestial land where thou art gone.



Faith.

A DEAR old saint wrote me to-day,
She is a girl of eighty-five,
What do you think she has to say?
"It is so good to be alive;
The house of clay is crumbling down,
My plans are made for moving out
To a new home, to wear a crown,
And be with Christ, without a doubt."

Helpless Man.

I N all sincerity I said:
"Since I saw light first in July,
The month of June must see me wed,
Or I will know the reason why;
I cannot help the hated fact
That I was born July, thirteen,
But this I say—my marriage pact
Shall be in June, when earth is green."

I said: "I will not have for host
The grave in time of frost and snow,
You can't catch me give up the ghost
When winter winds through yew-trees blow;
I will not flirt with suitor Death
When streams are still, and cold the moon,
I'll die when fields have fragrant breath—
I'll lay me down in lap of June."

But when I told my pretty plan
To Ruth, she said: "We'll wed in May,
'Tis my prerogative, my man,
To choose the month, to name the day;"
Since then, I've said: "Man—helpless is,
At birth, in wedlock, right or wrong!
Maids have their terms; Death may have his—
Man has to take what comes along."

The Schoolyard Oak.

I.

THOU standest by the river, on the left,
Of all thy forest comrades art bereft;
Thou hast survived a host of winters hard,
Now the sole monarch of the schoolhouse yard;
Thou dost participate in children's glees,
Thou tellest them the secrets of the trees;
And, though within thou hast a heart of oak,
Upon the children's heads thou dost invoke
A matutinal blessing, fresh and cool,
Each morning as they hurry past to school.

II.

How many generations hast thou seen
Of children play beneath thy branches green?
Thou hast, no doubt, retained thy youth so long,
Withstood the blasts, because the jolly throng
Of children, sporting round thy feet,
Rejuvenates thy breath, and makes it sweet;
The children's laughter thou dost love and know,
Upon their learned heads thou dost bestow

Arboreal passports, as they leave for good—
To earn in mead or mill their livelihood;
The while thy heart their forward footsteps speeds,
It palpitates paternally and bleeds;
And when the children of the days ago
Revisit scenes of youth, but thee alone
They find to speak to in the schoolhouse yard,
As if thou couldst the flight of time retard!
A sort of mist my vision weak bedims
As I keep gazing on thy burly limbs,
And think of how beneath them used to swing
The boys and girls as blithe as birds on wing!

III.

O thou majestic oak! so full of sap
Of sylvan soundness, on thy leafy lap
Have sung and nested countless broods of birds,
Around thy trunk have browsed the harmless herds;
The schoolhouse yard was then a meadow sweet,
The woodland peace unbroke by children's feet.
Thou didst adapt thyself to Nature's ways
In those thy gladsome adolescent days;
Of thee enamored were the sun and rain,
Mild moons and stars; nor did they love in vain;
Thou never couldst have reached thy noble girth
If thou hadst never felt affection's mirth;
Nor wouldst thou so tenacious be of life
Unless thy love had been sincere and rife:
Love fashioned thee superbly grand and strong,
Love is thy guardian from vandalic wrong.

IV.

O mighty monarch! canst thou tell just when
Thou wert established in this inland glen?
Hast thou a record of thy rural reign?
How long hast thou been sovereign of this plain?
Were there at first pretenders to thy throne?
How many years hast thou been here alone?
Who planted thee? Was it a vagrant breeze
That dropped thee here to be the king of trees?
Or did thy parents set thee by their side
Where, to thy infant years, low crooned the tide?
Did they tell thee thou wert a tree elect?
Didst thou, as sapling, their desires respect?
Wert thou their solace by the river's edge?
To fail in that would be a sacrilege.
Didst thou their senile sufferings allay?
And didst thou wish they could forever stay?
Then, when the sky behind the hills grew pale,
And night and loneliness crept down the vale,
Without thy parents, was the darkness drear,
And, in the stillness, didst thou shed a tear?
I think I understand thy ligneous heart,
In feelings we are not so far apart;
God planted thee! and in thy night of grief
His breezes whispered to thy heart relief;
Through love and sorrow thou didst grandly grow,
Thy tears all vanished in the morning glow!

V.

Thou veteran of this valley fair and free!
Let me confess my steadfast love for thee;
I want to tell thee ere thou com'st to die,
While thou, despite thy years, art hale and spry:

How glad I am the pristine pasture green
Was e'er converted to a school demesne!
Else I might not have found thee to adore
In thy retirement by the river's shore.
In place of grasses, children grow around,
Methinks in them thy greatest joy is found;
Thy mission is to make the recess hour
To every child replete with magic power.
I bless the halcyon day when first we met,
And ever since I owe to thee a debt;
But I was then too busy with my play
To tell how much I loved thee day by day;
I have returned from far across the seas,
Where I have seen primeval giant trees,
To tell thee that I love thee best of all
The many trees I've known, both great and small!

VI.

Goodnatured oak, forgive the manners rude,
The selfishness and base ingratitude
Of all the children that enjoyed thy shade,
And in thy branches found an ambushade,
Who left on thee an evanescent mark
By carving their initials in thy bark.
I think, if we could see thy royal heart,
Our greed and thoughtlessness would soon depart;
We'd learn to be impartial, kind, and fair,
To serve, like thee, and cast on God our care.
The children all—their wanderings dost thou trace?
Have all done well? Have all escaped disgrace?
A few have fallen on their final sleep,
Dost thou lament their lot, feel sad and weep?

Oh, what a multitude, were all to meet
Around thy trunk, a circle all complete!
And have the "master" in our midst once more,
Just as he used to be in days of yore.

VII.

Beloved tree, thou well rememberest him
Whose person always was so neat and trim.
I wish I could, in unpretentious verse,
Remove from off my soul an ingrate's curse,
And sing of him, who merits higher praise
Than I can hope to give in faulty phrase.
My pedagogue he was in former years,
I am his debtor, always in arrears,
My teacher yet he is, although between
The teacher and the scholar intervene
Long, toilsome years, yea, more—Death's chilly mist,
Yet in my heart his ways and words exist.
Strong-willed and stern he was, beloved tree,
Yet very kind withal, resembling thee;
Thou wert a witness to his closing rule
Within the sanctum of the village school;
When he was buried in the churchyard nigh,
Didst thou, good oak, upheave to Heaven a sigh?
On that sad day, perhaps, thou wert the one
That valued most the service he had done:
Let me with thee pay tribute to the name
Of my first pedagogue—unknown to fame.

Sweet be thy slumbers, teacher kind,
Beside the church's door!
Schoolchildren's voices on the wind
Thy resting-place pass o'er.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Beside thy grave my heart is stirred—
I am one of the boys
That in stentorian tones thee heard
Call out, "Less noise, less noise!"

The voice authoritative, stern,
That made us quake with fear,
When we were indisposed to learn,
I nevermore shall hear!

No more wilt thou, in morning cool,
In Scripture-reading guide,
Nor, at dismissal, lead the school
In singing "Eventide."

But o'er thy grave float tender lays
Of birds from woods and meads,
And thou dost hear, on holy days,
The chant of ancient creeds.

Rest thou in peace! thy work is done—
Its fruit illumes the land,
The teacher's crown by thee is won,
School is dismissed—how grand!

VIII.

Beloved oak, we may not meet again,
Inscrutable God's ways to trees and men!
'Tis said of me that I shall live for aye,
Beyond the confines of the light of day.
But what of thee? Say they that thou must die?
Thou—that hast seen the centuries go by!—
To die!—thy bark, thy heart, thy soul, and all!
And nevermore to hear the vernal call?

Not so, beloved oak, believe it not,
Thou hast a precious soul that cannot rot!
Too grandly hast thou lived, yea, far too well,
To get at last naught but extinction fell!

IX.

I go: the mystic voices summon me—
They are the voices of eternity!
I shall precede thee to the realms beyond,
Grieve not o'ermuch, do not for long despond.
Thou, too, dost show thy age, more shrunk thy form,
Thy top betokens battling with the storm;
Sunk deeper are the wrinkles in thy rind,
An ancient look upon thy face I find.
Submit, great monarch, to tyrannic Time,
Aspire to grandeur in another clime;
My joy beyond will never be complete
Until I shall thy spirit gladly greet.
And, when, at last, thy earthly days are o'er,
When zephyrs osculate thy leaves no more,
When will have ceased to sing and build their nests
In thee the schoolyard birds, as welcome guests,
When thou art dead, thy soul a deathless tree
In God's prepared paradise with me,—
May the new "master" for a day suspend
The school's routine, and thy last rites attend!
And may the children of that future day,
Putting aside awhile their books and play,
Chant in thy obsequies this dirgeful lay:

Father of trees! Father of trees!
Our loss we mourn, we mourn!
For the great oak, for the great oak
We are forlorn, forlorn!

We give Thee thanks, we give Thee thanks
For his great bole, great bole:
Oh, grant repose! oh grant repose
To his good soul! good soul!

Isabelle.

REMEMBEREST thou, O Isabelle!
That twilight by the sea?
The transcendental words that fell
From lips so sweet to me?
And has it slipped thy memory clean,
Thy final sentence then?
'Twas this, my fondest quondam queen,
"Fickle, methinks, are men."

Thou wert an heiress: in thy veins
Blue blood rushed strong and sound,
While I, with strong prenatal chains,
In poverty was bound;
"It cannot be, honor demands,"
I said, "that thou shouldst be
A lady,"—then upon the sands
Our names sank to the sea.

Wouldst thou believe, lady of rank,
That then to me the Deep
Whispered?—"Come on my bosom dank,
Thy manly purpose keep;"
O Isabelle! dost thou surmise
Money is all one needs?
No! no! my friend, this old world cries
For notables of deeds!

Disappointment.

I TRAVELLED many knots of sea;
For I was weary, and had made
My plans to rest beneath the shade
Of a beech-tree in tuneful glade:
I found him dead—murdered! Ah me!

Rest.

A LEAFY lane, a rustic bridge,
Sweet clover blossoms in the grass,
A cozy cottage on a ridge,
And at the door a loving lass
Awaiting me—when shadows fall,
And paling is the amber west—
A weary worker,—this I call
The acme of terrestrial Rest.

Gone.

A FLOOD of galling tears fell on thy bier,
The day we laid thy body in the grave,
At rest art thou, frank friend, where waters lave
The grassy mounds; the wave-lilt thou canst hear.

Thy loving wife and children sorely miss
Thy cheery voice, thy love and kind caress,
Inane—heart and home, without thee to bless
Thy friends and kindred with a holy kiss.

We loved thee well, and thy intrinsic worth,
All gold, without alloy or any dross,
Has made more grievous to us all the loss,
When thou wert summoned from the scenes of earth.

O tender heart! dost thou perceive our pain?
And lookest thou from out the realms of day?
For more wert thou than fragile lump of clay,
Thou wert a soul—and thou hast slipped thy chain.

We promise thee, our own beloved one,
Shortly to come, and meet thee face to face,
Our Christ and thee we gladly shall embrace,
Till then, we say, "Father, Thy will be done."

One of These Little Ones.

BELOVED Byron, sore we miss to-day
The lovely light thy life shed on our way;
A star is missing from the sky of life,
Our hearts are sadder in this earthly strife.

But when we think of thee, our darling boy,
At home with God, in realms of growing joy,
We know thou shinest at thy very best—
Shine on, sweet star, and lead us to the Blest.

Harvest-Joys.

THESE wholesome joys the harvest yields:
To work all day in fragrant fields;
To eat with relish simple fare,
Astride a sheaf, in open air;
And, when is fled the afternoon,
To homeward walk, beneath the moon,
Beside the lass we love the best—
While a fair morrow bodes the west.
Yea, joys are these that never pall,
If we but say, "God gives them all!"

An Old Fortification.

I.

WAS it a Briton or a Roman's skill
That built these mighty earthworks on the hill?
Did yonder orb on Roman helmets shine
Where now the stolid steers in peace recline?
Or was it here the doughty British chiefs
Their last fight fought and forfeited their fiefs?
Whoe'er the warriors, Time has levelled all
Save these huge mounds the carnage to recall;
The brave defenders are reduced to dust,
Their shields and swords are eaten up with rust;
Kind Nature has embellished o'er their tomb,
And sealed her lips about the awful doom.

II.

I ask the grasses in this deep ravine,
"Did human blood incarnadine your green?"
I ask the oaks, "Did your ancestors tell
What on this ridge triangular befell?"
I ask the brooks that sing on either side:
"Did you behold battalions here collide?
Did swarthy soldiers of your waters drink?
And did they bivouac on your bosky brink?
Tell me, pellucid rivulets and brooks,
Do you have secrets unrevealed in books?
And is it mother Nature's harsh decree,
That you should keep these secrets for the sea?
Or is it lack of learning on my part
To understand the babble of your heart?
Loquacious rivers, be it peace or war,
Seaward contentedly your waters pour."

III.

A scene of peace is this ravine to-day,
No cry of war is heard to cause dismay.
These mounds are covered o'er with gorse and ferns,
And in these fields around the plowman earns
His livelihood, and helps the common weal,
While safe his person from a warrior's steel.
Sheep, oxen, yearlings, and large-uddered kine
Now pasture find where stood the battle line.
In the dark thickets, which surmount the rocks,
A fortress finds the predatory fox;
He is, at present, the most cunning foe
The farmers in this rural region know.
The squirrels, also, from yon oaken grove,
Beneath these hazel-trees delight to rove;
The luscious nuts so highly do they rate
That, frequently, the boys arrive too late;
With roguish merriment, from their high perch,
They view below the youngsters' fruitless search.
Yea, peaceful days are these, devoid of din,
But others fought and bled to bring them in.

Dr. Vance Smith.

[Member of the Old Testament Revision Committee. Sometime Principal of the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, Wales.]

BELOVED teacher, scholarly, profound!
A greater God than Calvin's Tyrant dire
Thou didst disclose to me;—Christ's doctrine sound
That God is Love, and not eternal Ire.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Thy faith perceived that Hebrew Writ reveals
The heart's great hunger for the Holy One,
Just as the plant its way to sunshine feels,
And shows in bloom its own light to the sun.

The paths of knowledge e'er allured thy feet,
Thou wert an Orientalist of fame;
Thy classes thou didst teach with reverence meet
In Hebrew to pronounce the Sacred Name.

Thy cultured presence levity subdued,
In thy mild eyes the light of wisdom shone,
To thoughts sublime thou wert in servitude,
Thy heart immaculate to Truth was throne.

To us thou gavest of thy very best,
The vintage of thy studious life we got,
To be thy pupils we were highly blest,
Thou wert our helper—but we knew it not.

Thine was the scholar's broad, enlightened creed,
That sees divinity in every man,
That knows the heart contains more worth than weed,
That man is God's own child, not under ban.

With great attainments having served thy age,
The mystic pathway homeward thou hast trod;
I owe thee much, O venerable sage!
Thou gavest me a loving-hearted God.

Christmas Eve.

“SO long,” we shout, by the schoolhouse door,
 “‘We’ll meet again in the glad New Year;”
And off we dart for our homes—we four—
 Already charged with the Christmas cheer.

Five miles along we discuss T. T.,
 The best of teachers we mark him down,
There never was nor can ever be,
 We think, his equal in any town.

We run; we loiter; we wildly shout;
 We quaff our fill at the wayside spring;
We four engage in a friendly bout,
 We crown the conquering hero king.

“So long,” shouts Lew, and “Good night,” says Jim,
 And then but two up the valley go,
Ere long Sam sees, in a cottage trim,
 The lights of home through the window glow.

The light is out in the windy west,
 The river road now lies dark behind,
Alone I climb to the hill’s steep crest,
 And snow I sniff in the upland wind.

Just as the road on the ridge I gain,
 I meet the maiden that holds me thrall,
This holy night, how my heart would fain
 Disclose its secret, and tell her all!

Lyrics of the Fields.

The parish church is ablaze with light,
Its glass antique looks like burnished gold,
The passers-by, who behold the sight,
Recall the birth by the angels told.

A lane leads off from the upper road,
On either side are bare locust-trees;
Ah! yon I see our serene abode,
Some strange emotions my heartstrings seize!

I hear a bark in the twilight deep,
The bark of one that is watching well,
And on he bounds with a welcome leap,
At sound of my alma mater yell.

Madonna-like beams my mother's face,
Her soul is glad at her boy's return;
We sit and talk in the ingle-place,
And watch the while the big Yule-log burn.

At eight we feed and bed down the stock,
It starts to snow, but the air is mild;
We watch the hands of the kitchen clock,
We talk about the Immortal Child.

'Tis midnight! hark! at the window sing
The boys old carols on themes sublime;
A peace profound broods o'er everything—
It is the mystical Christmas-time!

Dream-Life.

O H, how we travel in our dreams,
And visit various places,
Our spirits speed with wondrous ease
Across aerial spaces;
Surpassing fair in dreams things seem,—
The trees with leafy branches,
The shining streams, the placid lakes
Where float the swan-like launches!

In nightly visions we descry
Great cities rear their towers,
Illumined streets and brisk bazaars,
And parks with founts and flowers;
We jostle through the motley throng,
We hear the cries of venders,
As though awake, we feel the glee
That such a scene engenders.

Such strange, fantastic things occur,—
We see ourselves a-flying,
And, ere the night has run its course,
We feel ourselves a-dying;
We see ourselves infirm and old,
We get or lose some money,
Our dreams are sad, sublime, and odd,
While some are somewhat funny.

Yes, there are times when views sublime
Come trooping to our pillows,—
We see the ocean vast so plain,
The rolling of its billows;

Lyrics of the Fields.

We see the sunlight on the cliffs
That guard the restless ocean,
Our souls, at sight of ships and shores,
Are stirred with strange emotion!

Oft in our dreams we hear the bells
From ancient minsters ringing,
Then o'er our senses seems to steal
Melodious choral singing;
Our dreams sometimes depict a shrine,
We see our Lord and Maker,
The holy symbols angels pass—
Each soul is a partaker.

"Those angel faces" come in dreams,
We hear again their voices,
And, for a moment—all too brief—
Our orphaned heart rejoices;
On realm of dreams two regions ope
In part their secret portals,
Just for a night we pitch our tents
And dwell with the immortals.

How very like our waking hours
Is this our life of dreaming,
So much authentic, sound, and true,
And then so much is seeming;
Our life at times is all enmeshed
In things inane, erratic,
Again we soar to things divine,
And live in moods ecstatic.

Why should we crave a dreamless sleep,
And go without the treasures
Found only in the world of dreams,
In large ideal measures?

If foul, chaotic, are our dreams—
They are a serpent's hisses;
If visions clean, sublime, and grand—
They are an angel's kisses.

Heaven.

O! take it not unkindly, Lord, that I should speak
What sort of heavenly land my sinful soul doth seek;
Forgive my human cry, and the terrene attire
In which I try to clothe my spirit's chief desire.
There cannot be a perfect heaven, 'tis my surmise,
Without rose-colored dawns to stimulate surprise.
Blue skies I'll want; and clouds, superb in hue and form;
And rainbows to assure the passing of the storm.
My heart will yearn for trees, for brooks, and quiet glades,
And mountain peaks sublime, grand canyons and cascades.
'Tis not my wish it be a tropic clime all through,
Give me the sportive spring, a taste of winter, too.
And though Decay shall be abolished, and Disease,
I hope to see the tints of autumn in the trees.
Allot to me some work, dear Lord, that I may grow,
Just let me build upon the lessons learned below.
Eternal, toilsome day, I think, would not be best,
I'll need the stellar nights, the dark for soothing rest.
I also think I'll need the solace of the sea
To make me well and happy in eternity.
I have no liking for the surging, motley crowd,
Give me the precious few with simple ways endowed;
Yes, I must have the kindly souls that understand,
To make my life serenely fair in that fair land;
And Thee, O Christ! I'll want—to cleanse my soul from sin;
And Thy redeeming immanence—without, within.

The Quest.

I UNDERSTAND the temples of old Rome,
The subtle questionings of ancient Greece,
The Hebrew's cult, the Druid's oaken dome,—
They were dull dawns that sought the Prince of Peace.

Togetherness.

I.

SAY, did you ever hear of such a word as that?
I think not; for this moment it was minted pat;
Somehow it quite expresses something that I feel,
It has within its breast a balm my ills to heal.
It makes the strength of armies; coalesces States;
It has a will of iron that can defy the fates;
And its "esprit de corps" is what insures success:
There is a world of comfort in Togetherness.
In centuries of old they called it, "Tribe," and, "Clan,"
To-day we learn to term it, "Brotherhood of Man;"
Sweethearts call it, "Courtship." The Married name it,
"Home,"—

A miniature Eden beneath an azure dome.
By Faith 'tis called, "The Church;" while "Friendship"
'tis with friends;
Hope designates it, "Heaven,"—its sway there never ends.
Call it, "Companionship," "Compassion," or "Caress,"
It means the selfsame thing—Togetherness.

II.

Oh, blessed be God for Togetherness!
With this we are never quite comfortless;
The beasts of the field, and the birds of air,
Instinctively know there is safety there;
And when the wee toddler, fatigued from play,
Asks, "Where is mamma?" at the close of day,
He asks for the boon of Togetherness;
And when we adults, in some sore distress,
Our Lord importune to be reconciled,
We pray for the selfsame boon as the child.
O friend! fear naught but isolation,
'Tis that alone that is damnation,
That indeed is death, misery untold,
When a soul to Love's orbit fails to hold;
Have no dread of the angel that gathers
Us to God, to our mothers and fathers;
He who loves will not be companionless,
He will find the heart of Togetherness;
In death he will sing, when cold is his brow,
"No evil I fear; for with me art Thou."
Call it, "The Trinity," "Immanuel,"
The selfsame thing—Togetherness—they spell.

III.

Happy lovers on the hills,
Picking wilding flowers,
Myths to us are mundane ills,
Merry morning hours;
Shall we, darling, live together,
In a cot amid the heather,
In the sunny summer weather?

Lyrics of the Fields.

Wedded workers in the fields,
Gathering golden sheaves,
Earth to us her secrets yields,
Restful are the eves;
We have been so long together,
On the hills, in valleys nether,
In all sorts of earthly weather.

But there's sadness in the air,
Woods have russet tints,
And there's grayness in our hair—
Dissolution's hints;
When is snapped earth's silver tether,
Shall we, darling, be together,
In the sunny heavenly weather?

Undivided.

I.

LISTEN! I have in my parish
Two little sisters sweet,
Creations most discreet
Of loveliness and grace;
And in their lives I trace
Incarnated evangels,
Their constant guardian angels
Are Purity and Peace,
Who watch without surcease
These two, Edna and Gladys by name,
Whose affection is a growing flame,
Be the days gloomy or garish.

II.

They are always together—
At night, by day,
In school, at play,
In church, at home,
Where'er they roam.
They grow side by side,
Join hands o'er the tide
Of childhood's years,
And naught appears
To mar their love,
The heavenly dove
O'er them broods, awake or asleep;
In their slumbers dulcet and deep
They have the light of dreams;
Oh, there is naught, meseems,
These sisters sweet can separate,
Not even death can devastate
Their common bliss,
Nor can they miss
Love, fair or foul the weather.

III.

God's Cause they greatly cherish:
Among my parishioners
They are missionaries;
They love the holy place,
There they behold His face;
If any find fault,
Or suddenly halt,
These two
Are true.
If anything goes wrong,
Their love is always strong.
If any shirk,

Lyrics of the Fields.

These sisters work.
When others are displeased,
And hate the parish priest,
They love; for him they pray,
And help him day by day.
The world to them is fair,
On Christ they cast their care.
Edna's address is—Heaven;
While the mirth
Of the earth
Unto Gladys is given;
Nevertheless,
Both live and bless
In my parish yet,
Nor will God forget
Their work, nor let it perish.

IV.

O Edna dear! thy form so frail
Is laid beneath the grassy sod,
But thy sweet soul, within the veil,
Reposes in the arms of God.

Thy mild, inquiring eyes of blue
Are sealed by God's delicious kiss,
Thou growest 'mid surroundings new,
With angels in the land of bliss.

O happy, pious child of earth!
So early thou wert summoned hence,
To mansions of celestial birth,
And things of greater consequence.

In heaven thou art a schoolgirl now,
The angels are thy teachers there,
Sweet child, dost thou inform them how
We do things here, and earth—how fair?

Of us thou hast not ceased to think,
Across the silent cataract
Of death extends aloft the link
Of loving thought that stays intact.

Though hid the path that thou hast trod,
It does not seem thou art afar,
Thou livest on one side of God,
While on His other side we are.

There's naught but God that us divides,
And He is Life, and He is Love,
Both shores He joins with His love-tides,
And life is one below, above.

We are not helplessly bereft,
There's sweetness in our anguish keen,
To us thy earth-life thou hast left,
We garner grace from what has been.

And what is more, O Edna dear!
We look ahead to meeting thee,
In a more spiritual sphere,
Where is no pain or agony.

O sainted child! do not forget
The parish old, but for us pray,
By sin and shame we are beset,
Until the shadows flee away.

We are the warders of thy grave,
It is to us a sacred spot,
We try, dear Edna, to be brave,
But, oh! there's sadness in our lot!

V.

O little Gladys! do not say,
"An older sister once I had,"
Ye are together every day,
Please say, "I have," and just be glad.

The Better Way.

O DEAR, distracted heart of mine!
Perplexing questions cease to ask,
In quietness perform thy task,
As do the heavenly bodies shine.

Know thou that God Himself must sheathe,
There are no naked truths or laws,
They are incased in forms with flaws:
Do not dissect the air,—just breathe.

Be not distrustful any more,
Does any bird distrust its wing?
Or does he reason out the thing?
Dear heart, thy pinions spread,—just soar.

Too busy hosts of night and day
For mooted-points of abstruse kind,
They follow pathways well defined:
'Tis part of wisdom to obey.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Stand in a field of growing grain—
Dost thou there hear a vain ado?
The grain is glad beneath the blue,
And getting ready for the wain.

Watch yonder tree's confiding pose—
A thought of God indendri-fied,
Its symmetry the pasture's pride,
In love with every wind that blows.

And does the breeze ask whence it comes?
Does it e'er wonder why it stirs?
Ah! 'tis too busy wafting myrrhs
And essences of pungent gums.

O anxious, lacerated heart!
Have faith in God's established schemes,
The sunshine of His love e'er gleams
Upon thy checkered earthly chart.

Do earth-cares thy free action cramp?
Hast thou thy fears Life's light will fail?
And does Death's darkness make thee quail?
Dear heart! he'll carry his own lamp.

Elm Leaves.

JUNE-NIGHT I heard elm leaves
Their prayer uplift
To Him Whose gift
Is laughing love;—Who weaves
For trees and maids, meseems,
Their bridal garbs of dreams.

"Great God! we thankful are
For Thy green earth,
And for our birth;
We know Thou art not far,
Our hearts are filled with bliss,
The zephyr is Thy kiss.

"Grant unto us to bless
June-lovers true,
Who come to woo
Beneath our loveliness;
We'll give Thee glory, God!
And fertilize the sod."

Dorothy.

OF T, in my dreams, I see her form,
Down by the meadow gate,
A little girl with golden locks,
And mien demure, sedate;
Quite immemorial seems my love!
For her I did adore
Ere I had learned love's alphabet,
When I was only four.

'Tis said such love can never last
To see the glorious noon,
That childhood's love, like childhood's play,
Will vanish very soon;
Some may have evanescent love,
But mine will never die,
And I am told her love for me
Is yet both true and spry.

Lyrics of the Fields.

This little girl, with tresses gold,
My sweetheart was at school,
All other lads that craved her love
She treated very cool;
At noon recess together ate
Our dinner by the brook,
When school was out our homeward road
Beside each other took.

Out in the fields, where thickly grew
The daisies wild and sweet,
At set of sun, in summer-time,
How often we did meet!
And through the lanes we drove the cows
To pasture, in the morn,
With gladsome hearts we listened long
To music in the corn.

You want to know if I did wed
This maid with auburn hair,
If I did walk with buoyant step
Beside this lass so fair;
Yes, she became my bonny bride,
A playmate was the priest,
Out in the woods, with berries wild,
We had our marriage feast.

We do not live in childhood now,
We are wide seas apart,
She wedded one that loved her well,
And gave to him her heart;
But true to me, her childhood's swain,
Her heart has ever been,
She loves me yet, for sweet youth's sake,
And ever will, I ween.

Not quite so golden is her hair,
Besprinkled 'tis with gray,
She is no more the merry maid
That frolicked in the hay;
We do not stroll through woodland paths,
As in the days of yore,
But childhood's love becalms the breast
Amid the city's roar.

Was this sweet love, transparent, chaste,
Created all for naught?
Was it in vain our youthful days
With constant love were fraught?
The answer true to this must be—
Our lives divinely led:
We loved for aye, for joy, for pain,
Although we did not wed!

Christmas-Tide Musings.

I.

THEY are singing!
The rustic swains are singing
Beneath my window, on the snow,
Fresh from the fells are bringing
Their greetings to the glens below;
On this His holy birth-night
There shines on all our parish hills
A glory, more than earth-light,
Which lifts the gloom of human ills.
Oh, the singing,
The mystic midnight singing!
The merry-hearted rustic swains
To young and old are bringing,
To hut and hall, sweet Christmas strains.

II.

They are listening!
The cattle all are listening
With me, in awesome, radiant love,
And other worlds are glistening
In mute approval as they move;
For harmony supernal
Its sceptre sways o'er all the spheres;
This night, in mood fraternal,
They interchange their speechless cheers.
 Oh, the listening!
 The frozen rills are listening,
 The docile sheep within the fold;
 And crystal snow is glistening
 On roof, on road, on hill and wold.

III.

They are ringing!
The parish bells are ringing,
Ringing to worship, Christmas morn,
The tidings glad are winging
The parish o'er—that Christ is born;
The night is now a-dying,
To God's own house, from near and far,
The worshippers are hying,
Led thither by the Orient Star.
 Oh, the ringing!
 The Christmas bells are ringing;
 We thank the Lord for household joys,
 For boons this day is bringing,
 And for the singing of the boys.

IV.

They are dreaming!
The swains in death are dreaming,
In the churchyard, beneath the snow;
For time is onward streaming,
And ceased their carols, long ago;
'Tis said their souls are roaming
Abroad on every Christmas Eve,
That in the gathering gloaming
The fells, the vales, the homesteads grieve.
Oh, the dreaming!
Oh, how the dead are dreaming!
Dreaming this holy Christmas-tide,
And, oh, my thoughts are streaming—
Streaming to where their souls abide!

V.

Oh, the dreaming!
'Tis I, 'tis I that's dreaming,
As o'er my soul are streaming
Strange strains of music, sad but sweet;
Oh, the singing!
The rustic swains are singing
In heaven, and bells are ringing,
And hope to me are bringing—
Of glad reunion at His feet!

The Invalid.

FAREWELL, my withered leaves,
This day you have to go,
My spirit sad receives
A very crushing blow;
Back in the spring I prayed
For you, before your birth,
You came, and you allayed
My sufferings with your mirth.

Kind comrades, when you came,
I was an invalid,
You go, I am the same,
Of pain I am not rid;
A withered leaf I've been
For many autumns past,
Clinging, by thread so thin,
To life, till blows death's blast.

O leaves! you were so true
All summer long to me,
About my window you
Made shade ungrudgingly;
You whispered in my ear:
"Through pain is womanhood
Refined; the green and sere
Together work for good."

Your glossy green is gone,
Recall you what you said?
Do you in peace pass on
To be among the dead?

Lyrics of the Fields.

Your greenness is not lost,
It lives in Nature's breast,
Next spring, despite death's frost,
'Twill shelter many a nest.

Strange how we learn to lean
On such frail things as leaves!
For the dead babe, once seen,
Strange how the mother grieves!
Strange how the jilted swain
Allows himself to fret!
The secret of all pain
Is—joy and we once met.

I dread the coming days,
You greatly I shall miss,
So winning were your ways,
You brought me hours of bliss;
'Tis true, in other years,
Your kindred won my heart,
But you move me to tears,
To-day, as you depart!

Outdoors your days were spent,
Outdoors you fade and die,
While in my room I'm pent,
My life a fitful sigh;
Death lays you in the dust,
O'er you the sad rain pours,
Hush! leaves! I feel God's gust!
I—come—to—you—outdoors!

Man.

FAINT-HEARTED friend, into the forest go,
Mark well the features of the species all,
How in its sacred depths they grandly grow,
How stately stand they, massive, fearless, tall;
Fix thy admiring gaze upon an oak,
Be filled with a desire to be a Man,
With eyes uplifted, God of trees invoke,
And say, "God helping me, I can, I can!"
Go home to thy sweet little ones and wife,
And, as thy way thou wendest o'er the hill,
Think of new possibilities in life,
Exclaim, "God helping me, I will, I will!"

Woman.

DAUGHTER of Eve, oh, take my proffered arm,
Let us go forth into yon wilding wood,
My strength shall stay thee, ward off hurtling harm,
It shall be garnished by thy womanhood;
Seest thou this fragrant vine, whose tendrils twine
About the oak? On him she doth confer
Honor and glory. What an emblem fine
Of woman's clinging grace of character!

The Heart-Healing Hills.

I GO back to the trees and the rivers,
To the balms of my heart-healing hills,
Loveless women and men give me shivers,
They are fraught with the hatred that kills.

They have emptied on me all their quivers,
See! the blood of my heart's dripping red!
But my heart-healing hills will be givers
Of new life to my spirit half-dead.

Woe awaits the reformer that urges
The evangel of love and relief,
Soon around him the mob wildly surges,
Kept alive is the villainous thief.
A weak God that's appeased with dull dirges
Of the priesthood men want, as of old,
They'll have none of the Savior Who purges
Sinful hearts. Men want pleasure and gold.

This old world has no use for its dreamers,
On but few has prosperity smiled,
They wax fat and are crowned who are seemers,
While the seers on a cross are reviled.
Wanton women enthrone carnal schemers,
Make their court an iniquitous den:
No, this world has no use for Redeemers—
They are murdered by mammonish men.

I'll return. All my wounds in the laver
Of the hills will be washed and be healed.
I'll return; for the seer cannot waver,
He must tell what to him is revealed.
Did not He from the hills come back braver—
So much braver to go to His doom?
And His words had the hills' sweetest flavor,
Did not Jesus come back from the tomb?

Foolish world, do not think all is ended
When the prophets are put out of sight,
Just as sure as to God they're ascended,
They come back to continue the fight.
They are here! and their scars are intended
E'er to cause with remorse men to quail:
'Tis a proof that the world will be mended,
That the Truth is decreed to prevail.

In Town.

WHEN a spring morning breaketh,
A morning without clouds,
And when to work it waketh
The sallow city crowds,
I hanker for the freedom of the farms,
The fragrant forests, myriad rural charms.

When day of summer endeth,
A day devoid of frown,
When drowsy dusk descendeth
Upon the troublous town,
For healthful fellowship of fields I long,
The babbling brooks, the thrush's twilight song.

When moon of harvest shineth
O'er lurid city lights,
When her fair face refineth
September's tranquil nights,
For odorous grain-stacked stubble-fields I pine,
And for the country wench that once was mine.

When mellow autumn waneth,
About Thanksgiving-tide,
And man, as Heaven ordaineth,
Has all his wants supplied,
My heart is hungry for the simple joys
Of unsophisticated country boys.

When Christmas-time returneth
With thoughts of long ago,
When in town-mansions burneth
Yule's light with brilliant glow,
What haunts my musings is a rural scene—
'Mid meads a farmhouse white with shutters green.

And when the townsman goeth
To his long final rest,
When wealth on him bestoweth
It's costliest and its best,
Oh, how I hate the city's pomp and stir,
And more than ever wish my sepulchre
Be in the country churchyard quaint, by her!

God's Acre.

IN the old parish our dear dead
We lay to sleep upon the hill,
The sunbeams bright enswathe each bed,
There birds and breezes have their will.

There supernatural seems the light
Of moon on graves we love so well!
Tombstones appear like angels bright
That watch the inmates of each cell!

Lyrics of the Fields.

The dead seem not to be away—
God's acre stands amid the fields,
A hallowed presence, night and day,
That, as it were, the farmsteads shields.

So near they seem that we have lost
All fear of death. With us they are—
Asleep, of course. They have not crossed,
As some surmise, to regions far.

They seem yet nearer when return
Strange potencies to tiny seeds;
For then outdoors we farmers earn
Our living in adjacent meads.

The whistling plowboy is not sad,
And yet a sort of reverence
Lays hold of the bucolic lad
Who drives his team from fence to fence.

The happy harvest-time calls out
Matrons and maids to fields and ricks;
The lads and lasses laugh and shout,
And they indulge in harmless tricks.

Adults are caught oft gazing at
God's acre, harvest-crowned each year,
And, as they name this one and that,
Adown their cheeks there strays a tear.

A mother mourns her sucking child,
She looks across, with mute appeal,
Though past the storm of weeping wild,
She has a wound that naught can heal.

A maiden misses in the throng
Of harvesters her lover dead,
To her it seems a cruel wrong:
The harvest past, they were to wed.

In summer visitors are seen
In God's inclosure. Back they come
Awhile on time-worn tombs to lean,
To greet old friends in the old home.

Palm Sunday sees each sacred mound
By loving hands with blossoms decked,
When church is out, we view God's ground,
Their names we mutter with respect.

God's acre greatly mitigates
For us the cruelties of Time,
Its contiguity creates
Within us sentiments sublime.

The dead are with us. Evergreen
Their memories we the living keep;
Ere many harvests, so we ween,
We shall be with them—fast asleep.

An Old-Fashioned Garden.

YOU know very well that mortals all have
Their Edens in this vale of tears,
And you are aware that mortals are driven
Right out in the course of the years;
In this, I am sure, you will acquiesce—
That Time is the teacher of worth,
And that a few years in heaven must be lived
Before we appreciate the earth.

Lyrics of the Fields.

An old-fashioned garden, common enough,
With gooseberries growing galore,
Ripe raspberries, currants—red, white and black,
And apples the good garden bore;
In summer with flowers the garden was gay,
Their scent made delicious the air,
O garden old-fashioned of far-away days,
Thou wert so ineffably fair!

I got in my garden labor and care,
But toil most rewarding it proved,
I witnessed there growth, and suffering sore,
And death of the things that I loved;
From winter's cold blasts love sheltered me there,
And shaded the summer's hot sun,
Each day great delights my garden me gave,
Sweet rest when the day's task was done.

As backward I gaze through mist of the years,
And look, as it were, o'er the wall,
Mixed memories roll like waves on life's shore,
And thousands of things I recall;
Of all pleasant things that rush to my mind,
Oh, this is the sweetest to me—
That there, when a child, I planted a seed
That now is a fine apple-tree.

The tree is a dream of beauty in May,
With blossoms it is all aglow,
Along in September apples are ripe,
At Christmas the tree's white with snow;
Unknown is the planter, never a taste
Gets he of the fruit that's so sweet,
But this is his joy—that birds in it sing,
That children have apples to eat.

Indeed I am thinking much of heaven's bliss
Consists in recalling past mirth,
That over the ramparts saints like to look
Right back to this sacred old earth;
God grant unto me to see from heaven's heights
The growth and the fruitage of Truth
From seed sown by me, in tears, yet in hope,
On earth in the days of my youth.

Thou Shalt Love.

A FULL-BLOWN rose, the thorns among,
My solitary path o'erhung;
I tried to reach the rose so red—
A bleeding hand I got instead.

A beauteous being I beheld,
As perfect as was Eve of old;
For me she seemed as set apart—
I got instead a bleeding heart.

Do I in wrath my God beseech
To curse sweet things beyond my reach?
No! no! I never can complain,
But that's not saying I've no pain.

I cannot hate a full-blown rose
That fragrance on the world bestows,
My admiration for a maid
Must never by revenge be swayed.

Of all possessions one may gain,
What can be nobler than love's pain?
God, mother, lover, well know this;
Pain is wrapped up in every bliss.

From pain of hate, O God! save me,
Fill me with love's sufficiency;
Grant me to love these things of worth—
The roses and the maids of earth.

Mother's Magnificat.

I.

SOMETIMES I wonder if my song
Has ever touched a vibrant string
In human harmony or wrong,
In joy serene or suffering.

It is a song of mother Earth,
Her beauty and divine descent,
And of her child of selfsame birth
Who makes her life a sacrament.

'Tis true my song is somewhat sad,
Its strains in doubt and darkness grope,
Again it is exceeding glad—
Buoyed up by an immortal hope.

It is unsteady as the sea,
Far out it lifts in prideful swells,
It sobs in utter misery
On shallow shores 'mid wave-washed shells.

Its matins consecrate the morn,
It whispers love among the sheaves,
It wails in fields, of harvest shorn,
Its vespers chants in shrines of eves.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Epithalamic too its notes,
Connubial love it celebrates,
Upon the nuptial air it floats
In melody that animates.

It lulls my darling babe to sleep
Upon the breast she loves the best,
It soothes the woe of those that weep
Forlornly in an empty nest.

Throughout the watches of the night
It is awake by her sick bed,
It trembles at the solemn sight,
To wretchedness my song is wed.

In the great agony of grief
It wildly weeps among the graves,
To consolation it is deaf,
And things impossible it craves.

Inaudible within the mist
It is for days because of death,
For it intently you may list,
No praise of pain it promiseth.

It wanders in a maze of thought,
It seeks its lost exultant tune,
It marvels why a mother brought
A child to earth to die so soon.

My song is waked in dead of night
By her sweet voice, celestial grown,
Accompanied by wondrous light,
Her song resuscitates my own.

It has no more its selfish strain,
No more in earth-bound circles moves,
It praises the vicarious pain
Of motherhood; with age improves.

My new-born song soars to the height
Of consecration, life or death,
A mother's holy in God's sight,
As Mary was in Nazareth.

Great honors e'er demand great deeds,
And sacrifice is life's stern law,
A mother's mightiest when she bleeds,
Divinest in her travail's awe.

A mother's model is her Lord,
Invested with His saving grace,
Though pierced her soul with sorrow's sword,
Hers is a chaste Madonna face.

My teacher is a lovely lass,
My daughter, sainted at eleven,
Away from earth-life she did pass
To grow to womanhood in heaven.

II.

Sancta Maria,
Mother elect,
Mother of mothers,
Greater than sec^t

Sancta Maria,
Merciful be,
Make me a mother
Worthy of thee.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Sancta Maria,
Fame hast thou won
As the good mother
Of a great Son.

Sancta Maria,
This son of mine
Be an adorer
Ever of thine.

Tutelage.

TELL me, O Earth! the story of thy lord,
Whence came he? When? And in what manner,
pray?

Hast thou the record? Is it gone astray?
Or do I ask more than thou canst afford?

I think I do. With equal justice thou
Mightst me accost: "O Man! my fortune tell,
The mysteries surrounding me dispel."
I'd have to say, "O Earth! I cannot, now."

What are we, Earth, but children under age!
The offspring of the Manifested Mind,
That, for the present, happily, are blind,
That in obedience get out grandest wage.

The Dream Divine.

DID you ever sit up late,
When the folks were gone upstairs?
Did you hear the garden gate
Swung as 'twere by ghostly airs?

Lyrics of the Fields.

Did you ever sit up late,
Writing letters to your friend?
Did you question silent fate
If your lives would ever blend?

Did you ever sit up late,
Reading o'er his letters old?
Did you, when you saw the date,
Mark how by the years had rolled?

Did you ever sit up late,
Purring cat upon your lap?
As you gazed at glowing grate,
Did you hear your lover's rap?

Did you ever sit up late,
Youthful, animated, gay,
With your heart-elected mate,
Talking of the marriage day?

Did you ever sit up late,
Seeing faces in the fire?
Did you ever meditate
On the strange divine desire?

If you never sat up late,
If you never had the dream,
Oh, I pity you, proud Kate,
So unwomanly you seem!

Moorland Peace.

O MOORLAND! thy enchanted acres, wild,
Outstretched in this glad glow of summer morn,
On dim horizon heaven's blue garments touch;
Pink heather-blossoms thy broad breast adorn;
Thy sacred amplitudes I love so much,
A thousand times thou hast my soul beguiled.

I fled from thy retreats, and I disdained
The nourishment of thy maternal breast;
Jerusalem I've courted, Athens, Rome:
This day my heart asserts thy peace is best;
I am aweary of my musty tome,
For thy plain charms I barter all I've gained.

To thy peace-paths repentantly I creep
From the dogmatic ravings of the schools,
Pronouncing their assumptions superfine—
The sapless pedantry of stunted fools;
O pasture-paradise of sheep and kine!
I have returned to drink thy sapience deep.

In far-off, frigid regions of research—
Of theologic and of classic lore,
I thought of thee, I sighed to see thy face,
And prayed that I might know thy peace once more.
Henceforth be thou to me my means of grace,
Be thou to me my azure-vaulted church.

Thy breath is fragrant; purple depths of dreams
Intangible e'er haunt thy solitudes,
The honeybee frequents thy heather-fronds,
Far are unfaiths and scientific feuds;
Still fairies dance on thee, and wave their wands,
And in thy swamps the shiftless lapwing screams.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Oh, happy he, beneath thy skies benign,
Who tills the soil on thy capacious flanks,
Unknown to him the wrong extremes of town,
The frantic fight for honors, wealth, and ranks;
He is content with countryside renown,
Thou art his priest, his altar, and his shrine.

I follow paths my feet in dead days trod,
A shower of butterflies enlivens the air,
I hear the humblebee's low, happy hum,
And grasshoppers are chirping everywhere;
To thy shy, cloistral hollows I have come
For faith-renewal, for the peace of God.

On thee God's lovingkindness is abroad,
His glory glows on every heather spray,
I see His mystic movements on the grain,
He is the sunshine of this summer day;
With all His creatures I this day would fain
His greatness celebrate, His goodness laud.

Mother.

SWEET was the story thou wouldst tell
To us, at twilight, of the little lass
That lightly tripped o'er hill and dell,
In search of thyme and daisies in the grass;
Thou knewest well each sheltered nook
Where spring's first harbingers demurely blew,
The winding path along the brook
Where ferns and foxgloves in the hedges grew.

Diviner years of roseate hue
Beheld in thee a beatific bride,
Thou gavest one thy promise true,
Forever fuller swelled affection's tide;
Thy children were thy constant care,
Loving wert thou as mother and as wife,
I heard thee, mother, oft declare,
"It was the happiest time of all my life."

Profounder were the tragic years
I saw thee grieve for thy fond eldest child,
The foul fulfillment of our fears
Converted day to night chaotic, wild;
O God! let not Thy anger burn,
But can Thy grief surpass a mother's pain,
Who daily yearns for the return
Of children gone to heaven—but yearns in vain?

Love wrought thy death—the mother-love
That lavishly pours forth its precious nard,
Akin it is to that above,
It claims no credit, deems no duty hard!
And from thy sickly, bedrid child
Thou didst ward off awhile death's visage grim,
To all thy tasks wert reconciled,
Accounting all as service unto Him.

With him we laid thee down to sleep,
Whose birth awoke within thy bosom white
Maternal love,—that wondrous deep
O'er which e'er broods a pure celestial light;
Strange, lustrous glory poured the west
Adown thy grave, at three score years and five,
We took the omen to attest
A mother's attributes the tomb survive.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Just yesternight, in vision, came
Beside my bed thy calm, transfigured face,
Thy fond caresses were the same,
And I a child again in thy embrace;
The vision vanished with the morn,
Relentless day brought back my grievous gloom,
Anew, my mother, thou wert torn
From thy sad son, anew laid in the tomb.

O sainted mother! I have thought
My daily duties would be better done
If, in the gloaming, could be brought
To thee the tale of toil, or trophies won;
Till dusk I'd toil, through sun and rain,
Nor would I care how dark the starless night
If, at the elbow of the lane,
I found thee, mother, waiting with the light.

Thanksgiving.

O SOUL of mine! and canst thou think
Of all the benefits of God
To every age, to every clime,
And still remain a thankless clod?
Be not remiss in giving thanks
To Him Who does thy wants supply,
If ingrate thou, none of His gifts
Will e'er thy lot beatify.

For they of old did testify
'Tis good sincere thanks to give
To our Redeemer and our Lord,
In Whom we dwell, and move, and live;

Lyrics of the Fields.

The noblest spirits of all times,
Despite afflictions long and sore,
Their voices lifted up to Heaven,
And God on high they did adore.

Repleter far the world to-day
With benefactions of all kinds,
And richer grows age after age
With products of their master-minds!
Unrighteous Strife quiescent lies,
Within our homes there is no dearth,
And Freedom's sway is recognized
Among the nations of the earth.

And should not we, this year of grace,
Increase the volume of our praise,
As to the Giver of all good
We gratefully our voices raise?
For all the fields we plowed and hoed
Our Father blessed with sun and rain,
The lusty beasts co-workers were,
But God Himself made ripe the grain.

Thou, Lord, comprisest all our good,
Successes come by Thy decree,
All loves, all friendships, teachers wise,
Father, are only parts of Thee;
Thy children thank Thee for Thy love,
And kindly help through all the years:
Thou touchest us in all our joys,
And speakest peace in all our tears.

The Welsh Revival.

I.

BLEST land!—thus favored of the Lord,
Emancipated by His Word
Are thy strong sons and daughters fair;
For heavenly visions fill the air,
And light breaks from the Sacred Page
To lead aright this modern age;
An age—the best and wisest yet,
But with a proneness to forget
The lovingkindness and the ruths,
The application of the truths
Of Him Who wept o'er His own land,
Because it would not understand
The love consuming in His heart,
As He attempted to impart
The boons of light, of joy, and grace,
To pseudo-leaders of His race.

II.

Blest land!—if thou hast understood:
That Jesus is the Greatest Good;
That life, at heart, is God's own breath,
And has no league with sin or death;
That every nation is accursed
That will not put religion first.
Yea, blest, indeed!—if thou hast cast
From thee the trammels of the past,
And in this grander day hast found
That love and truth in Him abound;
That he who lives with open breast
Will ne'er pursue a futile quest;

Lyrics of the Fields.

That fear lies nigh the door of doom;
That love provokes the earth to bloom;
Ineffably ecstatic land!—
If thou His love canst understand.

III.

Blest land!—of old hast borne His name,
What time the monks to Britain came;
And e'en thy dark Druidic cult
Prepared thee partly to exult
In Jesus' advent to thy shores,
To welcome Him with open doors.
But not without a stubborn fight
The darkness yielded to the Light;
Thy superstitions, dying hard,
For long love's progress did retard.
Cold-blooded creeds, and dogmas all,
The mythic story of the Fall,
The dismal thought that God is far,
A foe to man, and bent on war,—
Have been dethroned by this new birth:
That God is Love in all the earth,
E'er brooding o'er our spirits frail,
Full of compassion when we fail,
Himself revealing in each heart
That does the right in field or mart;
His presence permeating souls,
Like summer breezes on the knolls;
His love within—a guiding light,
His love without—a sunshine bright.

IV.

Blest land!—that now hast come to this
Inheritance of daily bliss.
Young men and maidens, tell your dreams;
For still the heavenly vision gleams

On us, as we pursue our ways,
Just as it did in ancient days;
And through our lives our Father speaks,
His children's love He daily seeks;
Our hearts at once will cease to hate
When we behold His love—so great!
At last the Master, from above,
Has taught thee God is Faithful Love;
O favored land! when ebbs this tide,
I pray thee in His love abide.

The Dreamer.

GOD is a Dreamer!—love-dreams dreameth He,
From them the planets take their form and hue;
His archetypal dreams evolved are we:
Give God His time, His dreams will all come true.

Two Walks.

ONE vernal day through woodland paths
We slowly stroll—my friend and I—
Life's spring is surging in our veins,
As moves the sap to branches high.

Our quondam tryst, deep in the woods,
Arcadian is with new-born leaves,
From Nature's cornucopia great
Its green embellishments receives.

Low pipe the dryads through the groves,
And buds are bursting everywhere,
Fecund is Nature's breath, and warm,
Her infants' voices fill the air.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Amid the sylvan glory birds
A-pairing are, and leaf to leaf
Makes love, and whispers,—oh, so sweet!—
“Love, love; oh, love;—for spring is brief.”

Then passing through arboreal aisles
We hear a hymeneal hymn,
It soars and falls in cadences,
And ceases in the distance dim.

Another day—a perfect day
In autumn, in the woods we rove:
Ablaze the aisles with flamelike leaves,
O’erhead a crimson dome the grove.

Ah, leaves! why are ye tinted so?
Your green is oxidized to gold,
Have sultry days dried up love’s sap?
Are ye become selfish and old?

Throughout the forest fanes we hear
Funereal music—just a sough,
Scarce audible; we catch but this,
“Of love we’ve had enough, enough!

“Our leafy lives in love we lay
Upon the lap of sacrifice,
In hopes that from our fertile dust
New leaves, new loves will yet arise.”

The dome collapses, and the lights
Of aisles are quenched by Boreas’ breath;
“O glowing leaves!” we say, “ye light
Your own descent to realms of Death!”

The Old Homestead.

IT stands resplendent in the sun—
The whitewashed house, the gray old barn,
Around are elms, and fir-trees dun,
Their forms reflected in the tarn;
Below the house, green meadows smile,
They stretch far down to meet the streams;
Above, there leads a steep defile
To moors beyond,—the haunts of dreams.

Upon the farm 'tis harvest-time,
And I—a youth—work with the men,
From dawn, midst scenery sublime,
Until the shadows fall again;
The harvest moon climbs o'er the peaks
As we approach the farmyard gate,
Where mother waits, and sweetly speaks,
“What made you work, my boy, so late?”

Again 'tis harvest on the fells,
I have returned from foreign shores,
Some friends, who said their sad farewells,
Remain to greet me at their doors;
And, as of old, at close of day
Home plod the reapers full of joy,
But dead is she that used to say,
“What made you work so late, my boy?”

O dear old homestead! through thy door
Is borne the last of my own race,
Their joys and sorrows now are o'er,
They sleep within this hallowed place;

Beneath the boughs of this old yew,
Where dream my dead, this day I stand,
And thee, old home, in vain I view—
To me the dearest in the land.

Easter Grief.

THIS Easter morn our hearts are sore;
For awful havoc Death has wrought:
Depressed we are in every thought
For those who live on earth no more.

In Easter-tides of long ago
They raised with us the sacred song:
We miss their voices in the throng,
It makes the heart the home of woe.

They broke with us the mystic bread,
We drank the sacrificial wine,
And joined in litanies divine
In praise of Him Who once was dead.

This Easter finds us at their tomb:
No shining angel hovers nigh
To give us rapture for a sigh,
The oil of joy in place of gloom.

These graves but circumscribe our scope,
Their names inscribed on monument
But make our grief more permanent,
And hold us from the larger hope.

They blind the vision of the race,
And blur the profile of the plan
Our Father has ordained for man,
That yonder is our rightful place;—

Lyrics of the Fields.

In that fair world beyond the night,
To which this life of mortals slopes,
And spite of sorrow ever gropes
In darkness for the dawning light.

Wilt Thou, O Christ! assuage our grief?
Thy scepter can Death intercept;
The First-fruits Thou of them that slept,
O'er Life and Death Thou art the Chief!

The Secret.

SHOULD you solicitous be to know, and ask,
"Where did you learn to tackle so your task?"
I answer true,
Since it is you,
"I learned the rule
In Love's great school."

And should you ask, "Where did you get the smile
That seems to say you have no fret nor guile?"
I say at once,
"Oh, not by chance,
I learned the rule
In Love's great school."

Or should your query be like this, "Oh, where
Did you find out that love puts bliss in care?"
Without delay,
Oh, let me say,
"I learned the rule
In Love's great school."

Lyrics of the Fields.

Or should you say, "I wish I had the skill
To smile and sing when I am sad and ill;"
Most candidly
I say to thee,
"Go to Love's school
To learn the rule."

II.

Oh, Love is keeping school!
In the gypsy tent,
In the tall tepee,
Through the earth is sent
His divine decree;
Yes, in every land,
In the cabin low,
In the mansion grand,—
Quenchless tapers glow;
For Love is keeping school.

Oh, Love is keeping school!
As of yore;
When marriage-bells are ringing,
When souls are heavenward winging,
As of yore;
In birth-rooms Love is master,
In joy or in disaster;
Evermore
Love will be keeping school.

III.

O master! let me tarry
In thy school,
All burdens I can carry
In thy school.

A Lesson.

"I CANNOT live without you, mother dear!"
I said beside her death-bed, sorrow-blind;
"My boy," she answered, "Life cannot be drear
So long as God exists,—that thou wilt find."

She, like her Savior, disappeared from view,
But purer since has been the gladsome light;
To life's endurance mother gave the clue:
All things are bearable; for God gives might.

Evening on the Lake.

I.

A FLOAT on the lake we were, she and I,
When glory of sunset suffused the sky;
Transformed was the lake to a sea of gold,
And aureate waves on the lakeshore rolled;
Our boat glided on without aim or care,
We breathed, like immortals, a golden air:
It was such a sight we shall ne'er forget—
The glory of God our frail boat beset!

II.

Cloud-cherubs hung 'round the throne of the Sun,
And Day, in habiliments sad and dun,
Bowed low, and thus prayed, "O Light of my face!
Oh! tarry awhile, nor hurry apace."
The King to his suppliant made reply,
"Thy tresses take down, and peacefully lie;
For weary thou art, I'll call in the morn
With new bridal garb thy form to adorn."

Lyrics of the Fields.

We saw the great King kiss Day's tears away,
And Day settling down on forest and bay,
To rest 'neath the night, the stars, and the moon,
To wake in the morn—the first Day of June!

III.

The glory of gold fled from lake and bush,
And over the earth stole a sacred hush;
Transformed was the lake to a silver sea,
And silver-gray grew both lakeshore and lea;
Our boat glided on through the argent sheen
Of Night's lustrous stars and resplendent queen:
The realm of the soul hemmed us in so close—
Its gates were ajar when the moon arose!

IV.

We said: "Day's not dead, the night's not his bier,
The night's but a pause in his grand career;
The night is the hooded worn Day asleep,
While o'er him the stars their glad vigils keep;
Alembic of sleep, much akin to death,
Restores his lost youth, and makes sweet his breath;
Immortal is Day, while the Sun is King,
Though seemingly dead, he's a living Thing!"

On Seeing Gladstone.

I SAW in the great Gladstone's face the light
Of righteousness, benevolence, and truth—
The godlike attributes that made his might
Invincible, and his old age a youth;
His store of wisdom, his deportment plain,
His equanimity,—revealed the spring
Whence came his strength. Of worldly honors, vain,
He had no need;—he was a God-made king!

Oliver Goldsmith.

O GUILELESS Goldsmith! my first love
Among the poets thou hast been, and art,
Since thy "Deserted Village" wove
Its meshes fine around my youthful heart;
I know thy "Hermit's" quiet joy,
Thy "Traveller's" nostalgic pain—so keen:
For giving pleasure to a boy
With thy sweet lines that never cloy—
God rest thy soul in His domain unseen!

Muriel.

THEY all come back to me,
I live them o'er again—
The halcyon days with thee,
The pleasures we had then,
My Muriel!

The earth was very fair,
The sky was very blue,
We were a happy pair,
And thou wert always true,
My Muriel!

We wandered by the main,
On sea-kissed sunny sands;
The sea-song soothed thy pain,
In love we clasped our hands,
My Muriel!

The roundelays of rills
Enraptured thy young heart,
The sunlight of the hills
To thee joy did impart!
My Muriel!

The dear old days are dead,
Naught but their ghosts these are,
To God thy soul has sped,
Yet still thou art my star,
My Muriel!

I dream of days unborn,
Throughout my night of grief;
My night will merge in morn—
That is my firm belief,
My Muriel!

Robin.

LAST June I visited his grave
Outside the stackyard wall,
Where o'er his resting-place the grass
Was waving green and tall;
Yes, Robin sleeps where oft he drew
The harrow and the plow,
That rest was due him all, I think,
Who knew him will allow.

Oh, do not smile because I sing
The praises of a horse,
If you knew Robin as I did,
All this you would endorse;
A happy farm-lad I was then,
I slept upon the loft
Above the stable, and my bed
Was neither fine nor soft.

The stable stood beside a brook,
All night its babble weird
Made sweet my dreams, and then at dawn
My waking soul it cheered;

Lyrics of the Fields.

Till breakfast-time I did the chores,
And this would be the first—
To lead good Robin to the pool,
To quench his morning thirst.

Divinely fair were all those nights,
When on the loft I slept,
My simple prayers I breathed to God
As o'er me slumbers crept;
When nights were dark 'twas good to hear
The horses munch their grain,
And oh, how sweet, upon the roof,
The patter of the rain!

On summer nights of matchless charm
For hours I'd lie awake,
And then would fall upon my ear
The crying of the crake;
Down o'er the stairway, through the door,
Would moonbeams softly stray,
And rest like phantoms on my bed,
And on the fragrant hay.

I had them both, Robin and Bess,
Curried and fed by eight,
I thought there was no team like them
To draw a furrow straight;
The patient beasts, throughout the day,
Would my companions be
Where'er the farm-work called us hence,
On hill or level lea.

One night there came some dire portents:
The dog howled long and late,
I thought I heard a rushing noise
Pass through the farmyard gate;

Lyrics of the Fields.

Distressful groans roused me from sleep,
So like a human call,
I found poor Robin in great pain,
And prostrate in his stall.

I quickly saddled bonny Bess,
And galloped into town
To fetch a panacea from
A druggist of renown;
But, ere fleet Bess and I returned,
Robin had breathed his last,
His toilful days upon the farm
Were now forever past.

We dug for him a decent grave,
We laid him there to rest,
To sleep just where we lived our days,
I think, is far the best;
I have no dread of pallid Death,
He cannot do me harm,
But, oh, I wish they'd bury me,
Like Robin, on the farm!

I found no stone to mark his grave,
'Tis even with the sward,
But trembling aspens in the hedge
O'er him keep watch and ward;
Last summer other horses drew
The harrow, plow, and cart,
I praised them to the farmer, but—
With Robin was my heart.

My Message.

I.

I HAVE a message!—
Through shimmering sunshine and rain,
Through pleasure and punitive pain,
It enters my soul. Day and night,
The breaking and fading of light,
The seasons, the sun, stars, and moons,
Events fraught with banes, or with boons,
All nations, all epochs of time,
To me bring the message sublime;
This, too, declares the God of Galilee—
That Love is the key!

II.

I have a message!—
I've labored in rocky, unfertile fields—
Uprooting indigenous heather yields;
Of thorns and of briars I have cleared the land,
In hope I have sown the scarce seed by hand;
And, when I behold ripe crops in the sun,
I joy; for I know that my love has won;
A guerdon I have received for my toil,
Because in my heart is love for the soil.
I have the goodwill of my flocks and herds,
Their secrets to me carol forth the birds—
From the wee gray wren, to the carrion crow,
Because my affection for them they know.
At will I can stroll by the wild beast's lair,
Love is my palladium from peril there.
The rushes in the watercourses dank,
The dog grass that grows by the river's bank,

Lyrics of the Fields.

The tremulous leaves of the forest grand,—
Distinguish between the wave of the hand
Of the despoiler and the lover kind;
For Nature has feelings, and will, and mind.
The suitor untrue, who is overbold,
She quickly rebukes with her glances cold;
Announces to him her imperial law,
Which calls for integrity, love, and awe;
Her secrets to none will she e'er impart
Save to the religious, devout in heart.

O Priestess! thy chastening, grievous and hard,
Has taught me grossness and hate to discard;
I've learned at thy altars naught can sustain
The soul like love can in the hour of pain.
Grief's depths I have fathomed—for beast and man,
Perfidy I know, the frustrated plan;
And yet, from pain's couch, I have heard the breeze
Outdoors lilt love-lyrics of smoother seas;
And who does not know to a maid's heart free—
That Love is the key?

III.

I have a message!—
I am pained by the socialistic strife,
By the greed and the hate that are so rife.
How the strong sets his foot upon the neck
Of the weak! How the poor imprecates wreck
And ruin to befall the rich!
And the worse?—I cannot tell which.
When the breast is replete with jealous rage,
And missing is love,—what is wealth or wage?
The resort to force by the frenzied brain
E'er abortive will prove, disastrous, vain.

'Tis not an opiate peace to you I preach,
But active altruism that will outreach
All egotistic interests, and will serve,
Nor from the sacrificial road will swerve.
O selfish-hearted world! I have no word
But the eternal message of my Lord—
That God is Love, that Love is God Triune,
That man is Love when with His God in tune.
Not in supineness, nor in cruel deeds
Is there redemption for a world that bleeds;
Our Hope is Jesus, the Incarnate Love,
Who by His love made all, and makes all move.

O Christian Church!—the bearer of this news,
Why shouldst thou lose thyself in creeds and views?
Cease thy divisions, speculative thought,
Be known by miracles that love has wrought.
What good are genuflections, vestments white,
Without within the soul affection's might?
O Love of God! dawn on Thy Church anew,
Inspire with holy zeal pulpit and pew;
May there be heard again the verdict old,
"Oh, how these Christians love! behold! behold!"
Thou hast, O Church! if cold in days like these,
Lost the Kingdom's keys!

IV.

I have a message!—
I will promulgate this doctrine of love,
And I will live it,—its truth I will prove.
What is derision to me? What is scorn?
I will proclaim it,—for this was I born.
I will scale beetling crags of new thought,
I shall catch there great gleams by none caught.

God is waiting for me on the heights,
He assists me to make my free flights.
Buried sunshine of creeds of the past
Warmth will give me and light to the last;
But I will not forget that the sun
Is the source; its great light—shall I shun?
It is shining on me and my task,
In its heat and its light I will bask.
As a heretic let haters me brand,
My Christ I will love: He will understand.
I will school myself to adore,
And to marvel: thus, more and more,
The sweet solace of love will be mine,
And the joy that I cannot define.
The worst of all dearths is famine of love,
My best I will do the curse to remove.
My heart I will rid of all guile,
For hate—love, and for censure—smile
I will give, and goodness for sin,
And my love shall finally win.
Redeemer of men! is it not so?
Hast Thou not declared true love will know?
And need not I know? What is life
But chaos and wearisome strife,
Without wisdom? Love! Thou wilt lead
My hand to the generous deed.
Thy lamp, O Love! will light my way,
When all things vanish, Thou wilt stay;
Thou wilt guide through dusk—and beyond,
O my soul! why shouldst thou despond?
There will not be, there will not be
Impenetrable gloom for thee:
Death's curtain by Love's light will be withdrawn—
For Love is the Dawn!

A Day.

OH, a smell of growing things is in the air,
Zephyrs warm are breathing from north-west,
Just the softest sunshine shimmers everywhere,
'Tis the time my rustic soul loves best.
In the pastures breaths of brindled kine are sweet,
There the daisies smile with pink-lashed eyes,
Waving green are hay-crops, barley, oats, and wheat,
Over all, in blessing, bend June skies.
By the brook a hen her brood of ducks cajoles,
Lowling calves are waiting at the gate,
Sheep and playful lambs are grazing on the knolls,
Up the lane I take a drive with Kate.
Love-lays sing the birds in every hedge and grove,
Ah! the lane with foxgloves is aflame!
Is it any marvel that I am in love?
That like nectar to my lips her name?
Her bewitching black-brown eyes love-rays emit,
Youth's red roses beam on her lush cheeks,
Sweetly lisps her tongue love's ready words of wit,
Animated is she when she speaks.
And a soul dwells in her beauteous figure lithe!
Has a smile for every one we pass,
What a heaven to have her for a life-friend blithe!
Ah, she is my heart's ideal lass!
On and on we drive o'er heather-scented roads,
Honeybees our daydreams dulcify,
On we drive past fields and countryside abodes,
Lucky lovers 'neath an azure sky.
When sweet daylight wanes, the milkmaid calls the kine,
Honey-laden bees return when late,
Drooping daisies sleep at eventide divine,
Drowsy love retires to dream of Kate!

Hast Thou Noticed?

HAST thou noticed, fellow-lover,
How much fairer is thy fair,
When the bridal strains forth hover
O'er the altar, o'er her hair?
And her kisses, fellow-lover,
Ever sweet, but—sweeter there?

Hast thou noticed, fellow-lover,
How much lovelier lovely earth,
How much fragranter sweet clover,
When she shares thy sweetest mirth?
How her love puts, fellow-lover,
In thy labor greater worth?

Hast thou noticed, fellow-lover,
How she ages unawares?
How the wrinkles her face cover?
How are showing her gray hairs?
Hast thou noticed, fellow-lover,
With what care she climbs the stairs?

Hast thou noticed, fellow-lover,
How the woman at thy side
Thirty years, perhaps, and over,
Is much lovelier than thy bride?
How thy neighbor, fellow-lover,
Wept when his beloved died?

If thou hast, my fellow-lover,
Duly noticed everything,
Oh! again with kisses cover
Her fine face, her marriage ring!
This neglecting, fellow-lover,
Is what gives to grief its sting.

Bride and Babe.

'TWAS in harvest-time that she drooped and died,
My beloved bride of a brief, Brief year,
On her grave this night virgin snow lies deep,
And the trees are bare in the churchyard near.
Wintry blasts roar loud as they swiftly sweep
Like demoniacs fell the wide moor across,
By the frost is hushed the sweet vernal voice
Of the brook that sang between banks of moss.
Ay, the world is white, but my grief is black,
And my heart beats wild, oh, my heart beats wild!
For my bride-wife croons, to her dead babe croons—
A Madonna dead, in her arms her child!

Moans my heart to me: "Thou wilt hear again
The serene, soft song of thy favorite brook,
O'er the heathy hills summer peace will brood,
Friendly ferns will nod in this charming nook.
Aspen leaves will flirt with the warm-lipped winds,
And the lark will trill in a cloudless sky,
While beneath the grass thy bride-wife will be—
To her firstborn crooning a lullaby."
Sings my heart again: "Thou canst not retrace,
Ever onward, onward are set thy feet,
The delights of earth are but fragments small
Of the purer joys thou wilt yonder greet.
In celestial fields thou wilt find thy bride
And thy babe—beyond death's envenomed dart,
Like a dream forgot will thy grief then be—
It will not be long to abide apart!"

King of Terrors.

I.

GREAT Death! I have for thee a word
Of praise: when thou thy keen-edged sword
Unsheathest, thou impartial art,
Nor rich nor poor behold thy heart;
Thy lips are sealed, thine eyes are blind
To bribes; thy like we cannot find;
For thou art neither God nor man,
Our final foe and friend in one.

II.

Thy sway is universal, too,
The common lot why should I rue?
All things converge to thy embrace,
Aliens are kin before thy face.
Tell me, O Death! thy face when past,
What then? Taciturn to the last?
I will not placate thee, Strange Wraith,
Nor will divulge my hope and faith;
No favors do I ask of thee,
As I await thy dread decree;
O silent King! on thy black throne,
I simply want my rights alone.

Requiescas in Pace.

A NEW-DUG grave smells sweet to me.
O loved corporeal frame of mine!
Rest thou in peace, when death's decree
Will order thee in one recline;
We have been loyal each to each,
Sweet are earth-days, but part we must,
In heaven I shall my Lord beseech
To watch o'er thee, my cherished dust!

The Harvesters.

I.

A HAZE autumnal o'er the landscape lies,
Softening the flaming splendors to the eyes.
I prosecute my path through harvest fields,
And munch with relish the delicious yields
Of hazels, briars, and the wilding sloe,
Which in abundance in these hedges glow.
The early rivalry of growth, so keen,
Departed is; upon this rural scene
This day there broods a satisfying calm,
A peaceful note is heard in Nature's psalm.
Deep-toned to-day the music of the streams,
As weird and sweet as breaks o'er one in dreams;
The mountain rills antiphonally sing
To broader rivers, which their waters fling
O'er boulders in the picturesque, wild glen,
Far from their birthplace, and the haunts of men.
Still mindful of the scenes they left behind,
The brooks send back their praises on the wind—
To where they sprang, in regions bleak, but dear,
For moorland mirth they have a love sincere.
A Power there is that hurries all along,
And yet, the memories of their infant song
Both men and rivers in their bosoms keep,
When broad their lives have grown, and calm, and deep.

II.

But, as I still my pleasant tramp prolong,
I hear the laughter of the harvest throng,
Diviner melody than what is made
By wind or stream, on moor or in green glade.
Ah, here they are!—the harvesters jocose,
All busy binding oats, below the close.

Lyrics of the Fields.

This day winds up the happy harvest course,
The aged and the young are out in force;
The mothers also lend a helping hand,
Madonnas of the meads, a blessed band!
Upon the faces of the aged shines
Life's autumn-light, which softens senile lines;
They are the veterans of harvest-homes,
From toil they soon shall cease;—their long day gloams.
What healthy-looking lads! browned by the sun;
And, oh, what lasses! chaste, yet fond of fun,
They are the roses wild of these wild scenes,
The princesses of Nature, future queens!
Good girls, give me your guilelessness of heart,
Unknown to you the trickeries of art.
Ah! yonder comes the housewife, full of glee,
It is mid-afternoon,—the hour for tea;
All, with much merriment, partake of food
She passes round, in a good-natured mood.
The viands offered at a banquet grand,
In the superbest palace in the land,
Inspid are beside this simple fare,
Served here so deftly in the open air.
And what adornments Nature does bestow,
The parish is a panoramic show!
In gorgeous colors all the myriad leaves
Attempt to emulate the golden sheaves;
The clovers and the weeds, but lately bled,
O'er stubble-fields their dying fragrance shed.
Again I hear the brooklets on the heath,
I see red squirrels, with their sharper teeth
Than mine, crack hazel-nuts, and, with a zest,
Their morsel eat beside us on this crest.
The tap of the wood-pecker now I hear,
Wood-pigeons from the oaken-grove wheel near:
How truly wholesome is the reapers' mirth!
And, oh, how sweet the breath of mother Earth!

III.

But forth again to work the toilers go,
Just for an hour; for now the sun is low.
I sit a-thinking of the setting sun,
Of other harvesters, whose day is done;
But few of the old harvesters I find,
With whom I toiled in days so far behind;
In yonder churchyard rest their weary frames,
And seldom mentioned are their cherished names;
But they once drove their teams upon this slope,
They sowed the grain, and watched its growth in hope
The sun, the early and the latter rain,
Would bless the furrows, and mature the grain;
Amid such grandeur as I see to-day
They gathered in the crops of grain and hay;
Their toilsome days they lived in deep content,
And thankful were for what their Maker sent.

IV.

It matters little who improve the ground,
So long as those who toil in strength abound;
And, those who in the furrow cast the seed,
Perform the task because they love the deed;
And, those who watch its growth from green to gold,
Find the delights the changing seasons hold;
And, those who garner, sing their harvest songs
Of praise to Him to Whom the world belongs;
And, those who labor on these slopes so steep,
As His co-workers, get the boon of sleep.
What matters most is this: that fields are tilled,
And that the farmers with God's love are filled;
And, when the fruits and crops are gathered all,
That they in gratitude before Him fall.

V.

Ah, yonder is the well-known harvest moon!
The honest toilers of the afternoon
A-singing leave the fragrant fields for home,
While the red moon climbs higher up the dome,
And sheds her benediction on the heads
Of merry harvesters, who seek their beds;
Weary enough they are, and stiff of limb,
Yet on the air a quaint thanksgiving hymn
Arises to the Giver of all good,
Which fills with solemn awe the neighborhood:

Source of the seasons four,
The Father of the rain,
Lord of the fields' folklore,
The Ripener of the grain;—
To Thee our hymn we lift,
To Thee we render thanks,
The harvest is Thy gift
To mortals of all ranks.

Mother of mist and morn,
Music of stream and blast,
Caretaker of the corn,
Creator of the vast;
Limner of autumn leaves,
The Essence of all hues,
The Sheen of shocks of sheaves,
Distiller of the dews.—

The Strength of steers and swains,
The Life of fertile loam,
The Wealth of loaded wains,
The Joy of harvest-home;

O Husbandman of earth!
To us who plow and reap
Thou givest harvest mirth,
Thou givest us sweet sleep.

Autumn Gold.

BELOVED, come, shake off thy gloom,
Why should thy spirit lower sink?
The tufty heather is abloom,
The moorland is a mass of pink;
We'll climb the sheepwalks steep once more,
Up where the ridges reach the blue,
And be as blithesome as of yore,
When we were young, and lovers true.

What if the meads are mown, and bare,
And fragrant hay is heaped in stacks?
The aftermath is growing there,
Repairing what the landscape lacks;
The cuckoo's call no more is heard,
And mute the crake at close of day;
Yet there abides full many a bird
To bless the twilight with his lay.

What if the golden grain is gleaned,
And autumn now displays its red?
What if the lambs have all been weaned,
And fifty years since we were wed?
What if our fledgelings all have flown,
And live away in distant parts?
Yet, they are still our very own,
And live as children in our hearts.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Ah, beauteous blossom of our troth,
That smilest here so long and late!
Thou art a pattern to us both,
That, shine or mist, defiest fate;
Sweet wife, recallest thou that here
I did to thee my heart disclose,
And made to thee a vow sincere—
To love thee long as heather blows?

What aromatic mountain air!
And what a view of land and sea!
Away, beloved, with despair,
Bid all thy sad forebodings flee;
In all our years of wedded life,
Have we not had our share of gain?
Are we not holier, my sweet wife,
For all we've had of grief and pain?

Behold! our homestead in the vale
Is bathed in glory from the west,
The stubble-fields no more are pale,
The afterglow leaves naught unblest;
The sheepwalks show like paths of gold,
On the wide moor there lurks no harm;
How sweet, my wife, to thus grow old,
And journey homeward arm in arm!

Laborare est Orare.

THEY worship Thee, O God! who work
In office, field, or mill;
While infidels are they who shirk,
Despite their pious skill.

The Proposal.

OH, come to me, my Muriel dear,
Sit by me on this rustic seat,
Now that the leaves are brown and sere,
I have for you a secret sweet;
We met in May, when leaves were green,
You've been my sprightly summer girl,
You are the best I've ever seen,
You've set my heart all in a whirl.
All summer we have been good friends,
We have been happy every day,
I am so sorry summer ends,
I wish it would forever stay;
There's sadness in the hearts of trees,
The short-lived leaves will soon depart,
A miserere moans the breeze,
And autumn-tinted is my heart.
But must our summer friendship die
As do the leaves, my precious pearl?
Must we, too, Muriel, say good-bye?
Oh! won't you be my winter girl?
We'll woo while winter earth arrays,
And wed when next May verdure weaves:
We'll be as blithe as summer days,
We'll be as loving as the leaves.

Life.

BIRTH may be death,
Death may be birth:
Life's God's own breath—
In heaven, on earth.

The Missionary.

FROM foreign climes the stranger came
To view the city of the dead,
The living did not know his name,
Nor could recall his hoary head;
Day after day, street after street
He travelled o'er, with downcast face,
As if in search of friends to greet,
But could not find their dwelling-place.

Beside a mound I saw him kneel,
And from his lips o'erheard a prayer,
And, as to God he made appeal,
His face was sad beyond compare;
The saintly man to me bequeathed
A tale of love I'll ne'er forget,
Two names his sad devotions breathed:
Greatest, sweetest—"God," and, "Margaret!"

No hero he of bloody war
Recorded in our annals' page,
No knightly scars his body bore,
So honored by a martial age;
When he approached his country's coast,
None deemed him worthy of renown,
No friend he found to play the host
When he had reached his native town.

Simplicity becomes the men
That fight as warriors of the Cross,
Unknown they go, and come again,
They die,—the world notes not the loss;

Full fifty years the good man spent
Beneath historic Syrian skies,
The skies that o'er the Master bent:
Where walked the Light, now darkness lies.

Where Hermon lifts its snow-capped peaks,
Where Pharpar rages o'er the rocks,
And where the Syrian peasant seeks
A living from his vines and flocks,—
A youthful herald built a cot,
With Margaret as his comely bride,
They sought to lift the native's lot
In all the region far and wide.

For a whole decade did the twain
Their philanthropic tasks perform,
O'er hill and wady, gorge and plain,
They travelled through the heat and storm;
Though hated by the frenzied Kurd,
Who knows no righteousness or ruth,
They healed the sick, they preached the Word,
And brought the Syrians to the Truth.

O'er Hermon hangs a sombre cloud,
With grief the cedars fairly quail,
Young Margaret slumbers in her shroud,
Within the house the women wail:
"Light of our day, virtuous one,
Sister to Him Who for us died,
Fairest of women, thou art gone,"
They so disconsolately cried.

Margaret was honored more than most:
Her body Syrian sisters laved,
And she was carried to the coast
By Syrian peasants, stout and—saved;

Lyrics of the Fields.

Sung was her requiem by the sea,
Her bier besprinkled by the foam,
She sleeps beneath the old yew-tree
Where oft she played, a child at home.

The herald at his post remained,
Alone he toiled for forty years,
By faith in God he was sustained,
Forgot his grief in others' tears;
Summer and winter he beheld
The selfsame scenes the Master saw:
The common people, as of eld,
Embraced the Life that has no flaw.

At last, in that unrivalled sky,
He read the mandate of release,
He knew his time had come to die—
It filled his breast with sense of peace;
He thought him of that unknown grave,
To see it he had long desired,
Back home he came across the wave,
And on her grave was found—expired!

A Valentine.

I WONDER if she has it yet—
That ancient valentine
I sent her many years ago
In which I claimed her mine!
Somehow I have a wish to see
That document once more,
To read again the words of love
I penned in days of yore.

'Twas at a little country-store
I bought the dainty thing,
Upon my homeward way I felt
As happy as a king;
It was a thing of beauty, too,—
A heart all made of lace,
And at each corner, in bright hues,
There smiled a Cupid's face.

That was the only valentine
I ever sent a maid;
My classmate she had been at school,
Together we had played;
I made no secret of my love,
I think I told her all,
That, if I ever had the chance,
I at her feet would fall.

I wonder if she breathes the name
Of him she cast adrift,
And to her daughters if she shows
That old-time, faded gift!
Perhaps she tells what pretty things
Boys gave long years ago
To girls they loved;—may be she does
A thought on me bestow.

Likely enough that valentine
Is long ago forgot,
It does not matter if the girl
Is happy in her lot;
Incinerated 'tis, perhaps,
Whatever be its fate,
One thing I know—my love for her
Shall never turn to hate!

Brother.

MY only brother! eldest born,
The second thou the heavenly land to see,
Seven and twenty years hadst thou worn
Thy mortal garb when came the King's decree;
The freest thou from base alloy;
For pain gave thee a clean and guileless heart:
Thy healthless days thou didst employ
In teaching us to seek the better part.

Thou wert my patron in the days
I read the master-minds of Rome and Greece,
And many other ancient lays
So dear to youthful hearts, without surcease;
The human world grew large and old,
As we conversed, and backward cast our gaze,
We two unearthed ingots of gold,
Long hid in other tongues, and ages' haze.

The summer came, for thee the last
To be with us and with the flowers and trees,
Thy energy was failing fast
Despite the ozone of the balmy breeze;
And shorter grew our garden walks,
We set aside, perforce, the classic page,
More confidential grew thy talks,
Profound as those of any ancient sage.

And while thy prophecy of me
Too sanguine was to be fulfilled,
Yet, brother, it was kind of thee,
Ofttimes since then it has my spirit thrilled;

Thy promise somewhat compensates
For thy departure, and the pain I feel,
Through all the years there emanates
From thy concern for me a balm to heal.

The year had reached its ripening glow,
The harvest-hum was heard on golden hills,
The flaming glory flaunted low,
Autumnal dirges sang the mountain rills;
We laid thee down beneath the yews,
The holy ground with holy tears we blest,
Our hearts sobbed out their sad adieus,
We left thee, brother, to thy final rest!

Blind.

BESIDE the door she used to sit,
Her face betraying no dismay,
Instinctively her hand would stray
Across the page of Holy Writ.

Old Sallie there would have her nap,
Was lulled to sleep by buzz of bees
That had their hives beneath the trees:
The open Volume on her lap.

Her hand would find her fondest Psalm,
The Shepherd of the Twenty-Third
Invariably fulfilled His word,
And led her by the waters calm.

For Sallie now was old and blind,
Deserted, too, her cottage neat,
The quondam sound of baby feet
Left naught but memory behind.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Three stalwart sons had been her pride,
They were, she said, the finest lads
That ever wore their homespun plaids,
Well-liked throughout the countryside.

Those were old Sallie's dulcet days,
The vines then clambered 'round her door,
The yard was gay with shrubs galore,
Where birds poured forth their liquid lays.

Those were the days her soul was born;
Erstwhile they knew her as a witch,
The terror of the poor and rich,
Who gave her doles to curb her scorn.

For she was known to cause a strife
By subtle charms and magic wiles,
And turn to hatred winsome smiles,
Which made a gulf 'twixt man and wife.

She could bewitch the sweetest cream
A housewife ever poured in churn;
The farmer's dwelling she could burn,
Dry up his cows, or lame his team.

But mother-love a wonder wrought:
She set aside her occult art,
The love of children filled her heart,
And she to all a blessing brought.

She was as harmless as a dove,
Her soul, suffused with Christian grace,
Transformed her former fiendish face:
'Twas all the master-stroke of love.

Lyrics of the Fields.

The silent years stole Sallie's boys;
All mothers know the tale too well,
And suffer more than words can tell:
When fled their brood, fled are their joys.

They grew; they sailed to foreign lands,
To seek their fortunes far away,
Intending to come back some day
To spend their gold with lavish hands.

But Sallie saw her sons no more,
Their many missives duly came,
Which said they loved her just the same
As on the day they left her door.

I was the reader of those lines,
She won me for her private scribe,
And held me by a toothsome bribe
For which a youngster's palate pines.

And should my voice of pathos boast,
To this ascribe its mellow mead:
That, when a boy, I tried to read
Those letters from a foreign coast.

She loved to have the Gospel read—
That speaks of Mary Magdalene
Converted by the Nazarene,
And how she mourned her Savior dead.

And then the passage where it saith
A poor, blind beggar met the Light,
And prayed in earnest for his sight,
And got the boon because of faith.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Her life-companion fell on sleep,
She kissed his brow, and stroked his hair,
As swain, she said, he won her fair,
And never failed his vows to keep.

Throughout the summer in the sun
She sat, companionless and old,
Her visage wore a look that told
Her earthly race was well-nigh run.

When autumn's wand was on the woods,
To Sallie's cottage in the lane
There came her worst and dreaded bane—
The parish sold her household goods.

I'll ne'er forget her grateful look,
The tears her furrowed features laved,
When I informed her I had saved
The tear-stained letters and the Book.

Where Law dispenses to the poor
Scant, frugal alms, oft with a grudge,
Blind Sallie had at last to trudge,
And leave her cottage by the moor.

The Poorhouse room was bleak enough,
Old Sallie could not brook the change,
The darkness there was cold and strange,
And the attendants course and rough.

But soon there came a servant kind
To take her to the mansions grand,
Prepared for her in God's own land:
Old Sallie is no longer blind.

Around her bed we knelt in tears,
It was a peaceful Sabbath morn,
She died a-nursing her firstborn—
She had not seen in thirty years.

We laid her in a coffin plain,
The letters propping up her head,
The Book across her bosom spread,
Where saintly John sings his refrain:

“There shall no more be curse; nor sea;
There shall no more be lonesome night;
The Lord Himself will be the Light;
Blest are the dead that die in Thee.”

Ambition.

I DO not want the dollar,
Without or with a taint;
I want to be a scholar,
I want to be a saint.

The Thriving Village.

I.

THE hill-girt village, spreads o'er valley-lands,
Their rich alluvia furnish all demands
The body makes, from infancy to age,
And add thereto a compensating wage.
The soil indeed is never known to spurn
The honest toiler, nor a kindly turn;
Bland Nature heaps on man her copious boons,
She brightens up with joy his morns and noons.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Plain agriculture in this lovely vale
Is work of love to stalwart men and hale;
This constitutes the secret of success;
For Nature in return delights to bless:
I have not seen abroad a greener spring,
Nor found in all her realms a truer ring
Than on these hills and undulating meads,
Where she her board prepares, her children feeds;
Nor have I seen more pleasant, restful farms,
Along whose hedgerows blossom thousand charms:
God's blessing on the industry of man
Has countermanded here the primal ban.

II.

Swollen into rivers are the moorland rills,
Along their banks are thriving woolen mills;
The ductile streamlets drive gigantic looms,
In concert with their music commerce booms;
The industry is known both far and wide,
The employees in amity reside
By their employers, deprecating strife;
For social ills are not extreme or rife
In this quaint hamlet, now well-nigh a town;
Here peace and plenty honest efforts crown.

III.

And, as one saunters through the village street,
At morn or eve, he gets a chance to greet
These sons of toil, these weavers slim and pale,
Who stride along beneath a bulky bale
Of yarn, of fulled or unfulled cloth,
Evinced neither hurriedness nor sloth.
Upon the village street are also met
Contented tenant-farmers, not a fret

Upon their faces rubicund displayed,
With them their wives, most modestly arrayed;
When safely garnered are the farmers' crops,
These happy housewives visit village shops;
Believe me, friend, the frugal ways of these
Have been the means of paying college-fees
Of brainy boys, whom to the world they lend,
And thus the village influence extend.

IV.

Yes, oft from farm and weaver's cot go forth
Ambitious sons, who prove their sterling worth
As men of science, teachers, and divines,
Physicians, architects; and some—whose lines
Are cast as workers in some useful trade,
Arising slowly from the lowest grade—
Become employers, men of wealth and mark,
Their ardor kindled by ambition's spark.
The hamlet's daughters, too, become of note,
And reach celebrity in parts remote,
As nurses, singers; or as wives, they grace,
With pleasant ways and comeliness of face,
The households of the boys with whom they played,
Who, led by inward promptings, far have strayed.
Some live and die in this salubrious spot,
Incomparably placid is their lot;
To them unknown the ceaseless stir and strife
That, in the smoky cities, menace life.
But do not think that human life corrodes
Amid these sheltered lanes and neat abodes;
No, here, as elsewhere, broods Eternal Love,
Bidding His children rise, and forward move;
Through knowledge of the world, its peace, its pain,
They learn to know what's loss, and, what is gain.

V.

Within the village never lived police,
The School and Church are keepers of its peace;
The former institution trains the mind,
The latter teaches mortals to be kind.
And are not these the guardians best of all
To ward off crime from cottage and from hall?
Their spires surmount the domiciles of men,
They are the glory of the hill-girt glen;
These silent representatives of God
The dwellers teach that man is more than clod.
What grander sights than these can one behold?—
Children on their way to school;—young and old
In modest, calm demeanor, on their way
To their devotions on the Holy Day.
The chubby faces of the children sweet
Irradiate rapture on the village street;
Their voices dulcify the breath of morn,
And cheer the pensive mind of the forlorn;
Ye generations of schoolchildren! flow,
Flow on forever in the morning glow,
Along the winding street, like limpid streams,
And as ye flow, sing out your childhood's dreams!
More tranquil still is this abode of rest
When has returned the Day—of all the best;
The water wheel has ceased its pleasant whir,
There is a lull in the industrious stir
Of both the woolen mills and farms around,
Nowhere is heard a sacrilegious sound.
The incense of the holy hymn and prayer
With heavenly fragrance fills the Sabbath air;
A solemn hush has settled over all,
Both young and old have heard the joyful call
To worship; of the destiny of man
They think and talk; and of the daring plan

Of Christ, Himself a Villager, and Who
Essayed a world to sanctity to woo
By the great, sacrificial road of Love,
The royal road that leads to bliss above.
Blest art thou, hamlet, blest beyond a doubt,
If thou hast Him—Whom Nazareth cast out!

Britannia et America.

BBRITANNIA et America!
Two Loves of mine I'd have you know;
I'll praise them long as silver streams
To unpolluted oceans flow;
The former—mother—gave me birth,
The latter—daughter—nurtured me:
They are the loveliest lands of earth,
And pledged to make the nations free.

Britannia! ever cautious, kind,
With jealous rage fill not thy breast
Because thou seest pride of growth
In thy large daughter of the west;
Do not distrust the Western Star,
Now that she shines so bright and strong:
America will never war
Save to exterminate a wrong.

America! e'er brusk, alert,
Thy mother's ways do not disdain,
Throughout the ages she has been
An advocate of virtues plain;
Let not thy vastness, thy great wealth,
Thy innate aptitude to plod,
Make thee neglect thy moral health,
Nor to forget thy mother's God.

Britannia et America!
Eterne be your irenic bonds,
And o'er this bellicose old world
Your righteous sceptres wave like wands;
Your common mission is quite plain:
On continents where reigns caprice,
On low-lived islands of the main,
Enthroned the Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Summer Dawn.

A STRANGE awakening on all sides is felt,
Too incorporeal, too divine for words;
In groves, where but an hour ago dreams dwelt,
Their matins sing the dawn-bewitched birds.

In close-cropped meadows grazing are the flocks,
Astir are cows in clover aftermath;
And lairward stalks a disappointed fox,
The timid rabbits scurry from his path.

A merrier melody the rivers sing,
They are more certain of their destiny;
Alive the mist—it moves—it is a-wing—
It goes to meet the dawn on uplands free.

E'en in the tiny grass-blades one discerns
A quiver at approach of daybreak bright:
Along the roadside sensitive are ferns,
And hearts of flowers are filled with great delight.

The sturdy forms of oak and pine and beech
Are not insensible to breathings soft,
To dawn the forest gives a greeting speech,
The sweetest music swells from leaves aloft.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Far, far are cities populous and towns,
Quaint inland hamlets are descried by me,
Thatched cots and farmsteads on the hills and downs,
And on my left the undulating sea.

Its bosom hyaline the brine now bares
To the rich colors that at dawn are born,
Anon, adorned with countless solitaires,
Its breast becomes a mirror for the morn.

Dear Dawn! and dost thou come with healing balm
To those whose night has been a watch of pain?
And are thy emanations such as calm
The perturbations of the weary brain?

As I survey, one spot I see is sad—
God's acre wakes not with responsive glee,
But all is well if, while they lived, they had
Appreciation, Dawn, of likes of thee.

But, when from my dawn-reveries I wake,
I scan the sky, and lo, the east is red!
And on the sea serene, on land and lake,
Day reigns supreme! Ah me! my Dawn is dead!

The Tryst.

WHERE the sunshine shimmers
Through the oaken leaves
On the forest-fringes,
Where the morns and eves
Are like bashful dryads,
With long auburn hair,
Clad in trailing garments,
Diaphanous, fair.—

Lyrics of the Fields.

Where the crane is calling
In the growing hay,
Where the robin warbles
His erotic lay;
Where pours forth the blackbird
His glad praise profuse,
From the swaying branches
Of the stately spruce.—

Where the brooklet lingers
By the roadside cool,
Where the trout are wary
In the shallow pool;
Where a rustic footbridge
Spans the brooklet's tide,—
Meet me dawn of May-Day,
My affianced bride.

Love's Garden.

HAST thou strolled in Love's green garden?
Hast thou breathed its fragrant air?
Ne'er was Eden, to my thinking,
Lovelier, nor so fair.

In Love's garden sweet is labor,
Spectres never haunt its nights,
Crime ne'er desecrates its arbors,
Each one gets his rights.

How I wish it were much larger,
Not world-wide Love's garden-grounds,
But remember 'tis our duty
To extend its bounds.

Send Me.

I PRAY not, "Give me easy things to do,"
But, "Give me fire and daring to essay,
And grit to heavenly visions to be true,
To do my utmost, thinking of no pay;
I want, O God! the oak-tree's sturdy form,
I want the loveliness of a June rose:
So, let me gladly take Thy every storm,
Let me my life-roots to Thy rains expose."

The Same.

THE Love that breaks in smiles around firesides,
That on Church-altars lays its incense-jar,
Is the same Love that glows in red dawn-tides,
And shines on me from the most distant star.

The Shepherd.

I.

O'ERHEAD are heard the lark's aerial trills,
While day is breaking over all the hills;
Dawn wakes the slumbering farmers on the slopes,
And sends them forth to toil with new-born hopes.
Ah, summer morns! ye tip the hills with gold,
Ye call the hungry flocks out of the fold
To dewy pastures on the mountainside,
O'er which they quickly scatter far and wide.
The lambs are seen now scampering on the knolls,
In joy abounding for their lacteal doles.

II.

Here comes the shepherd, he whose are the sheep,
Along these paths circuitous and steep;
At his approach they lift their faces high,
They soon perceive there is no danger nigh;
They know his form; his steps all fears disarm;
His dog and he are guardians from all harm.
No hireling he, but shepherd most humane,
E'en with his flock his manners are urbane;
He is to them the source of all their good,
Their kind protector that has by them stood;
They know him well for his intrinsic worth,
His hand has fed them from their very birth.
He knows their tendency to wander far,
At sight of greener grass beyond the bar;
Oft, weary miles, with torn and aching feet,
The shepherd tramps through storms of snow and sleet;
His tender heart receives a painful shock
When one wee lamb is absent from the flock,
He does not rest content until the lost
Is in the fold, regardless of the cost.

III.

The shepherd's watchfulness knows no surcease,
He does not labor simply for the fleece;
If all he loved and cared for were the gain,
His toil and early rising would be vain;
His friends they are apart from thought of pelf,
They are the makers of his better self.
And when the sheepwalks know the ewes no more,
The lambs disposed of to increase his store,
The shepherd's loving heart on him enjoins
Abhorrence even of the gory coins;

His soul from day to day is thus refined;
For his concerns and theirs are intertwined.
Nor will his wounded nature know repair
Till bleats of yeanlings vocalize the air,
And vernal vales are dotted white and black—
Then grief departs, his former joy comes back.

IV.

What wonder then the noblest king of all,
From Jesse's sheepfolds did receive a call
To Judah's throne!—to weld by skillful hands
A homogeneous race from tribal bands!
The flocks of Bethlehem's hills did school his heart
As shepherd of the Jews to play his part.
And when the Greater Shepherd later came,
He did not spurn to wear the lowly name;
To prove His love was both sincere and deep—
Laid down His life a ransom for the sheep.
Wilt Thou, Great Shepherd of the souls of men,
From town and hamlet, and from moor and glen,
In mercy gather us within Thy fold?
On us have pity, as Thou didst of old
Upon the straying sheep of Thine own age,
Although misunderstood, and death Thy wage!
From day to day repair our vagrant will,
And lead us forth beside the waters still;
From every sin do Thou our souls restore,
And make us Thine own sheep for evermore.
Help all Thy servants—under-shepherds, called—
Who o'er their various flocks have been installed,
Oh! help them of the office worthy prove,
Deny themselves, abound in care and love.
Impelled by love, not by the hireling's greed,
Teach them Thy sheep to guide, Thy lambs to feed,

To lead them unto Thee, the Shepherd Great,
Ere falls the darkness, and the hour grows late.
'Tis our belief, our hope, we hold it fast—
That each strayed sheep will want the fold at last;
Oh, teach Thy pastors, dogma-o'erprecise,
To find in shepherding—their paradise.

My Easter Christ.

IN creeds, O Christ! Thou dost not hide,
Nor art Thou bound in ages past,
Thou walkest ever by my side,
My trembling hand Thou holdest fast.

Thou wert, O Christ! a Child on earth,
The leaves, the flowers, the sky, the sea,
Put in Thy heart sweet joy and mirth,
When spring came back to Galilee.

And Thine, O Christ! the weary brain,
The sore suspense, the aching heart,
All through Thy days Thy love would fain
Ward off from others sorrow's dart.

Thine, too, O Lord! the wholesome joy
Of loving well a wicked brood—
The meat and drink that never cloy,
No matter what the vulgar mood.

Oh, what a storm Thy life provoked!
A storm that took long years to brew;
For heartless priests and scribes had yoked
Tradition to religion true.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Rabboni dear! in early days
Thou didst on me Thy love bestow,
Through childhood's dreams and mystic haze
Thy kindly mien did always glow.

My Christ Thou art, although thorn-crowned,
Thou art my soul's supreme delight,
With cords of love to Thee I'm bound,
Thou savest me from every plight.

My Lord! I have Thee here and now,
My life just palpitates with Thee,
Thy gentle touch is on my brow,
Thou dost declare my spirit free.

I know the secret of Thy power—
The giving of Thy love for ill
Made Thee of men the Foremost Flower,
The Essence of our Father's will.

Though war is raging in the east,
And ancient creeds hold tribes in thrall,
With joy we keep the paschal feast;
For soon or late what's false must fall.

My Easter Christ! when self is rife,
Take from my soul all sinful trace,
Grant me with Thee the risen life,
Before the presence of Thy face.

Beasts of the Field.

BEASTS of the field, I wish to be
At peace with you. To you, by right,
Belong the wilds; just suffer me
To roam at will, by day or night,
Through your domains primeval, grand,
I am no hunter craving gore,
But just a dreamer in the land—
In love with you and out-of-door.

Come, let us form a friendship-pact,
And end right here the ancient feud,
The jungles I will leave intact,
Your haunts I never will denude;
And should you see me by your lair,
My brother-beasts, you must not mind,
And, if I find you short of fare,
You will allow me to be kind.

You are not fiercer than is man,
Suppose we cease our growl and greed,
And to our Father's perfect plan
Of peace on earth give greater heed;
Why should we stain the fair earth red,
And be ferocious, cruel, wild,
When we divinely can be led
To a millennium—by a Child!

Old Letters.

WHEN falls the dusk—of the Old Year the last,
I light my lamp, and lovingly, in tears,
The letters old—reminders of the past—
I read, and count the swift-winged silent years.

Loved letters!—of the living, of the dead!
My soul you solace in these hallowed hours,
You breathe your blessing on my hoary head—
You are my spring-time's fair, though faded, flowers.

Fast falls the snow; the whitening fields lie still;
The dear Old Year is dead, and getting cold;
New Year! whene'er I go, 'tis in my "Will"
These letters old lie with me in the mold.

Anxiety.

TELL me, my child, the secret of the Blest,
Despite thy crying, joy is ever thine,
While I—exempt from tears—timorous am,
With anxious care I worry and repine;
The heavenly lovelight in thine eyes, thy smile,
Thy hand extended,—all bespeak thy trust,
A stranger thou to petty thoughts of clothes,
Of food, of drink—but takest feast or crust.

O God! whose fault? Art Thou a Tyrant dread,
Imposing burdens on our shoulders frail?
And, causing tremor in these forms of clay,
Dost Thou afflict us with Thy vengeful flail?
Are Thy demands for toil, beyond our strength?
Do work and guerdon fail to correspond?
Art Thou the Author of our anxious fears?
And dost Thou make of man a vagabond?

Away! away! ye pessimistic plaints!
My life ye mar, my soul ye agitate,
Ye are grim spectres brooding o'er my days,
Ye steal my strength, ye are the fiends of fate;

Malicious monsters! of my hopeful heart
Ye try to make a dark, chaotic realm,
And on the vast, mysterious main of time
A mariner of me without a helm.

Thee I exculpate, Lord! 'Tis lack of trust
That does of fortitude my heart despoil,
Concern for trifles of this mundane sphere
That fills with stillborn fears my days of toil;
Environments of men, the social ills,
The submerged tenth,—have been my petty themes,
Now I perceive, without a Christly heart,
All these reforms are but Utopian dreams.

I am Thy child, O God! and have no care
But to be good in Thy domain of faith,
Anxiety no more my heart assails,
The darksome future holds for me no wraith;
Thou feedest all the fledgelings of the air,
Content are they with what Thou deemest best:
I'll trust in Thee, I know Thou wilt provide,
And grant to me Thy covenanted rest.

The Unsundered Key.

I N the old homestead strangers dwell,
Where I was born and bred,
And certainly I wish them well,
May they by God be fed!
Around the hearthstone children bright
Of strangers play and shout,
And though the door they bar at night—
They cannot lock me out.

Lyrics of the Fields.

The kitchen has been changed, it seems,
New locks are on the door,
The hanging-lamp beneath the beams
Is hanging there no more;
Upon the shelf the teapot old,
That had a broken spout,
No more is seen, and yet, I hold—
They cannot lock me out.

And oh, that dainty bedroom small,
How different it looks!
It had a niche right in the wall,
Where used to be my books;
My mother found it hard, I vow,
Me out of bed to rout,
Though other youngsters sleep there now—
They cannot lock me out.

Around the ivy-covered eaves
The birds are singing still,
The box-tree's aromatic leaves
Now touch the window-sill;
The apple-trees we set have grown,
The firs are tall and stout,
Though others now the orchard own—
They cannot lock me out.

From that old home I've wandered far,
In point of time and space,
It seems as if my vesper star
Is shining in my face;
Death can't evict me from that home,
The very thought I flout,
Though dead, my spirit there will roam—
They cannot lock me out.

They hold by law the title-deed,
I question not their right,
On this one point we are agreed,
There is no flaw, nor spite;
And yet, I'll ne'er give up one key,
You wonder why, no doubt,
I keep the Key of Memory—
They cannot lock me out.

Expiation.

ART thou not done, O Conscience! Monarch dread?
Seven years of pain, seven years to be accursed!
My fare has been adversity's black bread,
Affliction's waters quenched my worldly thirst.
Have mercy, Conscience, absolution give,
Announce thy amnesty; oh, let me live!

A Friend.

MY own true friend! my very best!
We have been constant cronies,
So nobly hast thou stood the test
Of friendship, my Adonis!

All golden grain devoid of chaff
Has been thy friendship ever,
There's tonic in thy hearty laugh,
And thy advice is clever.

Our friendship, formed in distant days,
Allows us oft to differ,
Despite the parting of our ways,
Our feelings are not stiffer.

May God take care of thee and thine,
Till ends the earthly story,
Oh, may His love on thee e'er shine,
And give thee home in glory!

Wedded Bliss.

LOVE is in our hearts,
Love is in our home,
Through the year's four parts
Cloudless is life's dome.

Love is in each smile,
Love is in our speech,
Love helps all the while
Greater things to reach.

When from God above
Comes a babe to kiss,
Purer proves our love—
This is wedded bliss.

Rosalind.

MY sweetheart is a wild, wild rose,
For palace-gardens naught cares she,
Nor for proud queens of high degree;
In blest obscurity she blows
Along the hedges of the lea.

Her pink cheeks mists and breezes kiss,
She thrives outdoors through frosts and snows,
No one on her a care bestows;
And yet her chalice brims of bliss
As in green glades she gladly grows

Lyrics of the Fields.

She loves the wildness of the wold,
She knows the brinks of babbling brooks,
And nods assent in sylvan nooks
Where forest-lore to her is told;
My rose is wiser than she looks.

She breathes aroma o'er the fields,
The birds flit through her fragrant air,
She smiles about the wild beast's lair;
E'en o'er the wilds my sweetheart wields
A subtle charm, complete, and rare.

She blooms in lonesome country lanes,
In pleasant pastures stray her feet,
Around the fields of growing wheat;
Decrepit age she ne'er disdains,
To peasant children she is sweet.

O wild, wild rose! thou hast my heart,
I love thy haunts, I love thy ways,
My spirit pants for thee these days;
My radiant Rosalind thou art,
My love can brook no more delays.

The Brook.

I.

BEWITCHING brook! once more I see thy face,
And in thy features not a change I trace,
In regions far the thought of thee was dear,
Thy song in daydreams I could always hear;
And, like a man from paradise expelled,
Tenaciously to thee my heartstrings held;
In all my wanderings e'er for thee I yearned,
And now, from exile that I have returned,

Lyrics of the Fields.

My feet intuitively seek thy shore,
Paths trod by me a thousand times before.
Bright brook, let me sit down on this old stile,
Let me imbibe the secret of thy smile,
Let me acknowledge my indebtedness,
My gratitude permit me to express;
On this June day grant me an interview,
Our friendship, formed of yore, let us renew;
Present or absent, my attendant art,
Thy music finds me in the madding mart.

II.

Thou hast not larger, nor more aged grown,
As have my schoolmates, making me bemoan
The swift mutations since we quitted school,
In life's auspicious morning, beautiful.
Forgetful of the moments' fluent flight,
And, for the nonce, e'en dulled our sense of right,
Thy morning charms bound fast our truant feet
To thy briered banks; it was indeed a treat
To tease the trout in thy translucent pools—
To fragrant winds were flung the teacher's rules;
When we, belated, reached the school aghast,
And saw the master's face with rage o'ercast,
Our flagellation Trojanlike we took,
And more would take for thy sweet joys, brave brook.
The schoolgirls, too, would loiter on thy brink,
Their tresses at thy glasslike pools would prink,
The winsome maids we decked with garlands gay,
We paid them homage as the queens of May.
Fled are those hours, and scattered is the band
Of boys and girls that strayed along thy strand,
Our footprints of those mirthful morns, remote,
Deleted are; grass-grown the paths, I note.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Unchanged art thou, there's gladness in thy glee,
As unsophisticated as when we,
On Saturdays, our clothes splashed o'er with mud,
Care-free a-fishing came to thy fleet flood;
Thou makest tuneful still this rare ravine,
Thy limpid ripples exorcise all spleen.

III.

I know thy birthplace on the distant moor,
Thy journey down this dale by long detour;
By cot and farm thou glidest to the sea,
And scores of streamlets seek thy company;
Through rushes rank thou playest hide and seek,
Art garrulous and bold, anon art meek;
Thy infant croon I've heard in heathy haunts,
Delightful spots for geologic jaunts;
And where thou risest I have lightly tripped,
Thy nectar from moss-goblets I have sipped.
In thy retreats I had my boyish sports,
Thou first didst speak to me of foreign ports,
Forever thou wert babbling of the brine,
Singing to me of ships that crossed the line,
Casting some strange sea-glamour o'er me, then,
Curious to know what lay beyond the glen.
Thy song was sweetest in the summer-time;
For winter choked thy voice with frost and rime,
E'en then from thee I never drifted far,
Thy silence, forced, did not our friendship mar;
When very harsh and wild were winter's ways,
Together dreamed we of sweet summer days.
Thou art a blessing all along thy course,
Of this vale-verdure lush thou art the source;
E'en to the hills, where sterile soils exist,
Thou sendest moisture in great clouds of mist;

Lyrics of the Fields.

Not only dost thou help the crops to raise,
Thou also dost, without a word of praise,
Rotate the water wheel to thresh the grain,
Singing the while a pastoral refrain.
Reluctantly the flocks, in shearing-time,
Pass through thy pools—thou takest their fleece-grime;
In summer thou art sought by thirsty kine,
They wade thy fords, on thy cool banks recline.

IV.

Alders and willows, growing on thy banks,
Bend low their tops, as if to render thanks
To the Creator for His out-of-doors,
And the seclusion of thy shady shores;
Luxuriantly they thrive on either side,
Their boughs are interlocked across thy tide.
The lordly larch and spruce are also here,
Well-nourished and well-pruned they all appear;
Coeval are these splendid trees and I,
Our youth was spent beneath the selfsame sky;
And simultaneously youth-dreams we dreamed,
In sun and rain, and when the crescent gleamed.
The birds rear here their broods in safe content,
And in these groves their lifetime brief is spent;
They flit from twig to twig, now high, now low,
Now in the shadows, now where sunbeams glow;
And ever and anon they fly afield,
To find in hedge and furrow scanty yield;
But in these hospitable trees they seek
Night-shelter, when on hills the breeze blows bleak,
Ah, brook! at dawn their chorus drowns thy lay,
As they announce the advent glad of day;

And then a silence for an hour ensues,
Until afire the east with gorgeous hues,
In orient grandeur glistening is thy face,
On thee, on all there shines a lambent grace.

V.

A sorceress thou art beyond compare:
Who can beside thee, with a virgin fair,
Stroll forth, at morn or eve, but that thy charms
Will conjure in his breast hopes and alarms?
With mild-eyed Muriel oft I sought thy side,
And wondered if she e'er would be my bride;
We picked white pebbles from thy silver stream,
As diamonds all those to-day I deem;
All withered are the honeysuckles wild
She gathered in this dingle undefiled;
What matters that? Fresh flowers perfume the vale,
And Muriel's mine—affectionate and hale;
The seasons roll, all symbols pass away
In the fulfillment that shall ne'er decay;
The flowers may fade, we daily die;—but mirth
Of marriage makes e'er youthful mother Earth.
Ah, here!—no need to tell thee, best of brooks,
Thou hast love-secrets never writ in books—
She breathed the beatific word that made
Forever sacred to my heart this glade.
Oh, may these nooks be long the rendezvous
For lovers seeking secrecy to woo!
On Sabbath eves, when worship is dismissed,
Thy precincts they frequent; and thou dost list
To their avowals mutual, divine,
They give beside thee their betrothal's sign;
All those who woo and win, by thee, are blest,
Naught but sweet chastity dost thou suggest.

VI.

Yet, thoughts of thee fond lovers may dismiss
In the first raptures of connubial bliss,
Swains may perfidious prove, may come and go,
With the born bard, blithe brook, it is not so;
He is not actuated by a whim;
An omnipresent joy thou art to him;
He wanders weirdly, 'neath the mystic moon,
Along thy banks, with filmy dreams for shoon;
He tries to catch thy croon, and that again—
Inaudible it is to many men—
Of which thy song is lilting brokenly,
That fills the poet rapt with ecstasy.
Thy lay elusive can he catch? Thy sheen?—
That would be catching the Great God Unseen—
He can; for purged his soul from selfconceit,
Clean hearts can capture any vision fleet.
How to account for this affinity?
What haunts his hours? What draws him unto thee?
What others covet, why does he contemn?
The tides of worldliness why does he stem?
Eternity it is that haunts his dreams,
That makes of him a brother to the streams!
The Power that lifts thee from the briny deep,
That causes sympathetic clouds to weep,
That through dark subterranean clefts thee guides,
That energizes thy sea-seeking tides,—
Is the same Power by which the bard is thrilled,
Ye both God's offspring are, ye are God-filled.

VII.

Sweet stream, I've been a pilgrim, and am yet,
I know nostalgia, grief, fatigue, and fret;
I've said farewell to thee great many times,
As I fared forth in faith to other climes;

Lyrics of the Fields.

Of thee my thoughts have been, upon the main,
To thee my heart is true in all its pain.
Thou too a pilgrim art, from the great sea
Thou comest to delight the land and me;
The sea's land-solo is thy siren song,
Thy cadences enchant, now soft, now strong;
And to the sea returnest, lost thy lay
In the rhapsodic murmur of the bay.

My wanderings o'er, I pray it be my lot
To find God's peace in this well-favored spot,—
In a plain cottage by thy tuneful tide,
By thy nocturne my slumbers dulcified,—
Where, with the birds, the beasts, the fauns, and sprites,
I may, with simple heart, perform my rites
To Him Whose love is in and over all,
And cognizant of every sparrow's fall.
My soul attuned to Nature's many moods,
I may hold converse with the One Who broods
O'er all His creatures, in each copse and lane,
And find the fields a consecrated fane.

VIII.

Beloved brook! be with me at the end,
When languorous airs of death about me creep;
Sing to me then, as friend to dying friend,
Sing thou to me when others wildly weep.

Oh! may it be a mystic morn in June,
And this, the verdant valley of my birth,
Be last for me to see; and let thy croon
My spirit solace as it leaves the earth.

And let me die outdoors, in fullest view
Of all this grandeur of my native glen,—
To bid yon hill—my Olivet—adieu,
And these hoar habitations dear of men.

Lyrics of the Fields.

At peace with Nature, with mankind, with God,
Amid the sights familiar of this combe
To die;—my frame to sleep beneath its sod,—
It should not be for me a day of doom.

I'll want my Muriel there, my hand to clasp,
When on me be Death's kisses, cold as ice;
Her touch I'll feel, e'en to my final gasp,
Thy song I'll hear halfway to paradise.

I'd love to have wild blossoms on my bier,
And sprinkled o'er me in my coffin, too,
Wild blossoms, gathered by thy waters clear,
Of various colors—pink, and white, and blue.

Plain be my obsequies, and do not mourn,
No need of eulogy, or funeral-car,
On shoulders of my friends let me be borne,
Read "Ninetieth Psalm," and sing "Crossing the Bar."

I do not pray that my demise be soon,
But when it comes, beside thee be my grave;
Oh! let me leave upon a morn in June—
To be with Him Who crossed brook Kedron's wave.

Home.

SO long I'd been sad and forlorn,
A homeless man,
Methought I'd been, since I was born,
Beneath a ban;
Until there came a missive sweet,
O'er ocean's foam,
A child's handwriting on the sheet:
"Come home! Come home!"

So long and hard I'd toiled and wept,
That I forgot
That any in their hearts had kept
For me a spot;
"I have no home, no friend," I said,
"Beneath the dome,"
Until the message brief I read:
"Come home! Come home!"

So long my heart had been bereft,
I made this plea:
"In all the world there's no one left
That cares for me;
I am a vagabond true-blue,
I roam, I roam,"
Until there came this billet-doux:
"Come home! Come home!"

So long the weary voyage proved,
From pain to bliss,
So long to be from those I loved—
Their welcome kiss;
I reached my tedious journey's end
At hour of gloam,
This day our blessednesses blend—
At home! At home!



Holy Trinity.

NATURE, and Man, and God—these three—
I love beyond the power of speech!
The import of their blent decree
I know; for in me dwelleth each;
Distinct existences, withal
Their laws into each other's run:
Together do they rise or fall—
For Nature, Man, and God are One!

Earth.

FAIREST Daughter of the Absolute Mind!
Expressive are thy features of His grace,
And in thy order His ideals I find,
The splendor of His truth shines in thy face;
Thy mission is twofold—thou dost reveal
Eternal energies that beauty give
To thee; and these thou partly dost conceal,
That man might look upon His face—and live!

Patience.

RABBONI! let me learn of Thee
The grace of patience, when the road
Is rough, without the shade of tree,
And very heavy is my load;
Or when sheer weakness shuts me in,
And I am conscious of the end,—
Rabboni, take away my sin,
And grant me Patience for a friend!

The Old Farm.

I.

“**T**HE days are full of charm
Just now upon the farm:
This year again the planting's done,
Sown fields await God's benison;
Buttercups and daisies smile
By the orchard's rustic stile;
Swallows twitter 'neath the eaves,
Lovely, longed-for, loyal leaves
Whisper their secrets strange
Around the yard and grange;
In swampy spots
Forget-me-nots
Are out, all growing wild.—”
So writes my undefiled.

II.

“The while I write I hear
The cuckoo's call so clear;
Lambs, now two months old,
Frolic o'er the wold;
The robins are our welcome guests,
About the house they have their nests,
To-day they carry food
To their wee, callow brood;
The lark is still an early bird,
At dawn his madrigals are heard;
In the larch-grove, by your old haunts,
Erotic lays the blackbird chants;
The brooks sing as in other days,
Spring-clouds have still their fickle ways,
And May-skies, too, are just as mild.—”
So mother writes, my undefiled.

III.

“Through pretty primrose-perfumed lanes,
Much nicer than the public way,
And past your grass-grown quondam fanes
We walked to worship yesterday.

Grasses and blossoms wild of May
Made softest carpet for our feet,
For Sunday, just a trifle gay,
I thought; our Margaret thought them sweet.

The father who had two bright boys,
One prodigal, the other mean,
Paternal love that naught destroys—
That was the theme of discourse keen.

I wish all modern preachers preached
As plain as did the Son of Man,
We common folk might then be reached
And saved from sin, and from sin's ban.

It was Communion-Sunday, too,
Of Calvary we thought, where met
God's best, man's worst; and where the True
Bled for the False: it happens yet.

The graveyard, John, is getting green,
Old friends of ours have died this spring;
'Tis now ten years since you have seen
Your father's grave. Time's on the wing!

The neighbors oft about you ask,
I need not name them one by one;
Now, at my age, 'tis quite a task
For me to run the farm, my son.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Jane's mother died one year ago,
This week Jane comes to visit us,
Jane is just lovely, as you know,
And will not let me make a fuss.

She lives in that big house alone,
When are you coming home, my child?
My love to you, my very own.—”
So mother writes, my undefiled.

IV.

Ah! full of charm
Is the old farm.
'Tis time we should be reconciled:
Tell Jane I come, my undefiled!

Two Gardens.

O GOD! my soul is thankful that he lost
His Eden, pleasure-garden of self-will,—
Its tyranny;
And that he gained, Thou knowest at what cost,
The greater garden of Thy holy will,—
Gethsemane.

Enlightened.

SHE died. We know the meaning now
Of that bowed head and hoary;
Her death with eyes did us endow
To see her earth-life's glory.

To that vast future-life divine
Us daily she does beckon;
She knows we've changed—that we enshrine
Her memory—we reckon.

Margaret.

OH, no, she's not a big, big girl,
She is not grown to sweet sixteen,
Naught like the girls e'er in a whirl,
Who slight the bashful swains, so mean.

I do not mean my girl of old,
That I made love to in the lane,
On purple hills, and on the wold,
When light of day was on the wane.

No, no, not that; though that one's tints
This wee one has, her name, and hair;
Like Margaret's too the lovelight glints
From her brown eyes, I do declare.

Yes, she is "Margaret,"—sweetest word!
She is my daughter, just turned six,
The name her mother dear preferred—
Her eyes upon the crucifix.

I have my Margaret—precious pearl!
Yes, two; the other is not lost,
None to extinction does God hurl—
That we still love at sorrow's cost.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Come, little Margaret, love me more,
You are my all in all to me,
Some day we'll talk of the far shore,
Of mother,—and death's mystery.

Oxford.

BAREHEADED, in Addison's Walk I stood,
One perfect morning, early in July,
And said, "I have seen Oxford, oh, how good!
O God! I shall no more object to die!"

A holy grail is Oxford, out of which
Men drink the wine of wisdom, long on lees,
Ah! they that quaff are fabulously rich,
They are immune from mammonish disease.

Rabboni! hold this chalice to my lips,
I am athirst for knowledge Thou canst give;
Let me drink deeply, not in shallow sips,
Of Thy great truths blood-red,—and I shall live!

"Oh, drink ye all of this!" is Thy behest;
This wine Thy feet trod out, with labor hard;
Creeds do not count; devotion is the test;
Ah me! Thy hand that holds the cup is scarred!

Labor Omnia Vincit.

THERE is no such a thing as luck,
One has to pay the price with pluck;
'Tis he who toils that gets results,
In time of harvest he exults.

Forget-Me-Nots.

IN a dingle picturesque,
Ruins of a home are showing,
Past the sycamores and them
Still a mountain stream is flowing;
Scattered are the children all,
What their lot, there is no knowing,
But along the brooklet's bank—
Sweet forget-me-nots are growing.

In June.

OH, come, my Love, forth to the fields,
Her rarest nectar Nature yields,
Once more June's charms are on the world,
The trees their banners have unfurled;
While yet the east is grayish dark,
O'er upland pastures trills the lark,
In morning meadows graze the kine
Bedewed beneath the dawn divine.
Rejuvenated, verdant Earth!
Why cannot we too have our mirth,
And with thee celebrate love's birth?

This is the June for which we prayed,
To this retreat our fancies strayed
When vital pulses beat so slow,
And graves were gaping in the snow;
Then you, my Love, beside me crept,
And night by night your vigils kept,
Your Junelike presence in the room
Was gleam of dawn on fringe of gloom.
Oh, linger long, emerald June,
Hurry thou not away so soon;
For thou art Cupid's blandest boon.

Lyrics of the Fields.

In growing grasslands calls the quail,
The merry milkmaid, with her pail,
Unites her song with mountain brooks,
Which gurgle through cool ferny nooks;
The fields beneath June skies are blithe,
The thrifty crofter whets his scythe,
Haymakers' laughter on the hills
The air of June with music fills.
O June! that knowest naught of dearth,
Of vast, inestimable worth
Art thou on Nature's vestal hearth.

Love! was there ever June like this?
Have other lovers known such bliss?
Can it be true that none is fair
Till love's aroma fills the air?
That rival love of sun and breeze
Produce the beauty of the trees?
Can it be true that love of flowers
Is kindred to this love of ours?
Our blended life is jolly June,
True love is lord o'er dale and dune,
And naught is heard but Cupid's croon.

Intimations.

AMBROSIAL reveries of Time—
Of bliss beyond the tolling bell,
What are they but spring sprouts sublime
That summer sumptuous foretell!

Earth-Days.

O SWEET earth-days! O sweet earth-days!
Can I e'er find your sweeter?
And can the heavenly mansions be
Than my thatched cottage neater?

O sweet earth-days! O sweet earth-days!
Your joys are e'er increasing,
I wish you would continue thus
Forever, without ceasing.

O sweet earth-days! O sweet earth-days!
Of you I am not weary,
To think of parting, dear earth-days,
Gives me a feeling eerie.

O sweet earth-days! O sweet earth-days!
Perhaps you are prophetic
Of sweet heaven-days; if so, I trust
They will be energetic.

Anguish and Joy.

I.

O NIGHT! night, night, begone!
My brain is afire,
The demons conspire
To torture my heart,
O demons! depart.
Can this be hell! hell!

Their defiant yell
In the dark I hear,
They dance on my bier,
I see their fiendish grin,
My sin! my sin! my sin!
My lover true is fled,
I rave upon my bed,
Sleep hates me, hates me
For my infamy!
He is gone! for I drove
Him away without love;
The love that he craved
I selfishly saved.
O night! night, night, begone!

II.

O dawn! dawn, dawn, speed on!
Unbearable is life,
Conscience hurts like a knife;
Lift off the fields the gloom,
And off my soul the doom
Of the loveless; and I will
Over road, valley, and hill
Seek my lover, and will give
Him my love; for him I'll live.
Oh! for another chance
To say, "I love you, love you!"
Was I in stupid trance
When I scorned my lover true?
O my God above!
I am mad, mad, mad!
O my God! that I had
Another chance to love!
O dawn! dawn, dawn, speed on!

III.

Oh, ecstasy divine!
My joy I cannot smother,
I found my lover true,
O'er us the sky is blue;
Our love naught can destroy,
I have the Virgin's joy—
I am a happy mother!
Oh, ecstasy divine!

I Know.

I KNOW the spring reigns on the hills,
Because the early daffodils
In mother's garden are abloom;
Just now bird-melody distills
From tiny and from bulky bills,
Throughout my newly bourgeoned combe.

I know the summer proud is here,
Because in the reflective weir
A-bathing are the village boys;
Haymakers' laughter sweet I hear
In all the meadows, far and near:
Ubiquitous are summer joys.

I know the autumn's ruddy mien,
Because the softest golden sheen
Embraces the productive earth;
Kind autumn is a matron-queen,
On all the hills, and vales between,
She knows no scarcity or dearth.

I know the winter is our guest,
Because the world is bathed and blest
 With Christmas-tide's supernal light;
Enjoying her earned boon of rest,
Lifeless, apparently, her breast,
 The earth is clad in garments white.

I know my days come not by fate,
Because, at dawn and evening late,
 My soul communes with Thee, O God!
Death is the opening of the gate
To a celestial, higher state;
To me my feelings indicate
 I shall not rot beneath the sod.

Christ's Supremacy.

O BROTHER-MAN! why shouldst thou boast
 Of titles and of hoarded gold?
Why in thy mind is uppermost
 The thought of power? Why be so bold?
Hast thou forgot the Humble One,
 Who nothing had but moral worth?
By such as thee He was undone,
 And yet, to-day, He rules the earth!

Why shouldst thou independence claim—
 Of conscience, will, and heart, and mind?
By misdirected, worldly aim,
 Thou leavest all the good behind;
Hast thou not learned there is no force
 But such as emanates from Him?
To character Christ is the course,—
 He rules the realm mysterious, dim!

The Choir Invisible.

BY an ancient stream that flows
Past a maritime old town,
Ere the radiant moon arose
Oft I strolled in cap and gown;
O'er the river mist-clouds hung,
Fishers were far out, unseen,
But the songs, by boatmen sung,
Reached the shore through darkness e'en.

There's a river flowing past
Every town and city free,
On its breast, through dimness vast,
Generations seek the Sea;
I can hear, ebb-tide or flow,
Mariners make music weird,
Songfully they Godward go,
When the shores of Time are cleared.

The Land of "Allen Raine."

[The late famous Welsh novelist—Mrs. Beynon Puddicombe—who wrote under the nom de plume of "Allen Raine."]

OH, a land of peaceful pastures,
Oh, a land of myriad charms,
Dreamy moorlands, verdant valleys,
Fertile plowfields, thorn-hedged farms;
Windswept headlands, sheltered harbors,
Time-scarred cliffs along the main,
Haunted by uncanny seagulls,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Lyrics of the Fields.

Oh, a land of curious cromlechs—
Relics of the Druids old,
Battle-grounds where fought the Roman
With the ancient Briton bold;
Mounds that mark the burial-places
Where those warriors long have lain,
Castle-ruins, feudal manors,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Oh, a land of song and letters,
Land of true poetic flights,
Lyrics airy as the mornings,
Dirges sombre as the nights;
Paradise of old romancers
Weaving fancies of the brain,
Realm of genuine afflatus,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Oh, a land of holy living,
And of quest for the Unseen,
O'er its fields and hamlets broodeth
Ever a celestial sheen;
Running through its spirit-strivings
Is a fervid mystic strain,
Oh, incurably religious,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Oh, a land of gentle manners,
Oh, a land of loyal loves,
Noted for domestic virtues,
Known as "Land of snow-white gloves;"
Oh, a land of pure affection—
Vows are seldom given in vain—
Blest with happy, frugal firesides,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Lyrics of the Fields.

Oh, a land where sings the cuckoo
In the mornings mild of May,
Where the blackbird in the twilight
Warbles his melodious lay;
Where the skylark—bird ethereal—
Music pours o'er fields of grain,
Where the robin redbreast winters,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Where romances still are real
To young lovers as they rove
On the cliff-paths, in the moonlight,
Up and down the sandy cove;
Where the country lass bewitching
And the stalwart shepherd-swain
Talk of wedlock on the crossroads,—
Is the land of "Allen Raine."

Where salubrious saline breezes,
On the cliffs above the bay,
In all seasons, in all weather,
With the land-winds laugh and play;
Where, amid the time-worn tombstones,
Stands the House of God so plain,
Where on Sabbaths prayers are offered,—
Is the grave of "Allen Raine."

Where, in afternoons, the milkmaid
From the fields calls home the kine,
Where on uplands flocks are grazing,
By the roadside cowslips shine;
Where the babble of the brooklets
Merges in the sea's refrain,
Where the marine mists are weeping,—
Is the grave of "Allen Raine."

Lyrics of the Fields.

Where is sung the song of labor
By the plowman in the fields,
And where toilers hymns are humming,
As they gather harvest yields;
Where, at eve, the lads and lasses
Walk behind the loaded wain,
And his sweetheart's rake each shoulders,—
Is the grave of "Allen Raine."

With its charms, its quaint old customs,
With its humor and its pain,—
Illustrated by her genius
Is the land of "Allen Raine;"
Her admirers in the homeland,
Pilgrims from beyond the main,—
In the future will be mourners
At the grave of "Allen Raine."

The Voices.

I.

THE truth ye speak, ye voices of the air,
Though harsh ye seem, ye are supremely fair.
Ye come when one is resting 'neath his tree,
His mind content, his heart from sorrows free;
Ye come when men in peace and plenty bask,
Ye bid them rise and do some irksome task:
The truth ye speak—that neither pelf nor place
That makes one's paradise, but inward grace.

II.

The land was fair beneath my boyhood's skies,
I was a dreamer, dreading enterprise,
Performing dreamily my tasks when told,
By stream or wood, in seasons warm and cold;

Lyrics of the Fields.

God's love around me burning wondrous bright,
In field by day, and in the sky by night.
I chanted oft my matutinal mass
Amid the hedgerows, on the dewy grass.
I had my altar in an oaken grove,
And prayed that God my offering would approve.
My comrades were the birds, the trees, the rocks,
I had the friendship of the herds and flocks;
In worship joined with me the purling brooks,
Nature I loved in all her moods and looks;
The fields and groves to me were hallowed ground
Of a vast temple, where my spirit found
The Universal Spirit, felt Him near—
The Glory of His own refulgent sphere.

III.

But mystic voices came to me, and cried:
"Thou must not to this happiness be tied;
Go forth; put far from thee the sluggard's doom;
Go, toil, and make the wilderness to bloom.
Beyond thy paradise a desert lies,
Till it, if thou wouldst be both strong and wise;
Set not thy heart, O youth! on ease and sloth,
They cannot furnish pabulum for growth;
Let not thy soul from tedious tasks recoil,
The sweetest morsel is the bread of toil;
If thou wilt strive to free the world from sin,
Thou wilt possess a paradise within."

IV.

Obedient to the voices forth I went,
Not fully knowing what the voices meant;
Yes, forth I went, but with reluctant feet;
For on that day my Eden was most sweet.

'Twas then I found what a tenacious hold
Sweet Nature, in her aspects manifold,
Has on the hearts of youths, whose early days
Are spent a-dreaming in her sheltered bays.
It was a beauteous day, and Autumn bland,
A matron amiable, reigned o'er the land—
Her cheeks were ruddy, brown her flowing hair,
Her wealth of blushes aureate made the air;
She reigned a queen upon a golden throne,
And grains and grapes upon her garments shone;
The hills resounded with acclaims of her,
In her domain was heard a harvest whir;
Her sunburnt subjects, in her fields of grain,
Their Godspeeds waved to me across the plain;
Peace earthward floated through the mellow glow,
As I walked through her realms with footsteps slow;
And she, in passionate, persuasive way,
Pleaded most earnestly that I should stay
In the old parish, 'mid familiar scenes,
Where she the seasons crowns with ample means.

V.

Farewell, ye mountains! and ye vales!
Farewell, ye woodland nooks!
I'll sorely miss, I know, your gales,
Your wild, dishevelled looks;
I love the shrieking of your storms,
Your madness and your rage,
Ye wild winds were like fiendish forms
Just loosened from a cage.

Ye will be tearing these hills o'er,
Ye'll dash to spray the streams,
And I shall watch you here no more,
Nor hear your howls and screams;

Lyrics of the Fields.

And ye will pile the snow in drifts,
The upland glens ye'll bridge,
But I shall not be here your gifts
To view, on road or ridge.

And ye spring breezes! ye will blow,
And gently wake the flowers,
And whistle for, so soft and low,
Refreshing April showers;
Ye will caress the plowboy's cheek,
And whisper love's decree
To rustic swains and maidens meek,
While I shall absent be.

And ye unrivalled summer morns!
Sole sovereigns ye will reign
Upon the heath, upon the thorns
And foliage of the plain;
Ye will, devoid of noisome words,
From sleep the toiler wake,
And summon forth the hungry herds,
The thirst of wild beasts slake.

Farewell, ye misty noons of Fall!
Ye wave o'er me your wand,
My soul completely ye enthrall,
How can I break the bond!
Farewell, sweet lass! and schoolmates! who
Hear not the voices strange,
I promise you e'er to be true,
My love will never change!

Farewell, ye groves! and brooklets all!
My mother's grave! farewell!
The voices—oh, I hear them call
Me from this dreamy dell!

Farewell, my flock! my dog! my steed!
Farewell! away I hie
Myself from you, away I speed;
For loud the voices cry!

VI.

O world of humankind! chaotic, vast,
At thy complexities I stand aghast.
Thy various tribes and tongues, customs, and hues,
Thy lights and shades, thy visions and thy views,
Thy struggles, hatreds, jealousies, and strife,
Thy loves,—all these and more make up thy life.
The great migrations now I understand,
The prehistoric moves from land to land;
Before them gleamed the vision; ay, they heard
The voices harsh commanding them to gird
Their loins with courage, to subdue the earth,
To make the wilderness the home of mirth.
O ye uncultured, wild, nomadic hordes!
And ye brigands that bathed in blood your swords!
Ye navigators of unsounded mains!
Ye pioneers of the western plains!
I am your brother, heart to heart with you
I dream and drudge, and my steep path pursue;
I whimper not, O Voices! but give thanks
To God for being in the royal ranks
Of helpers—bearers of the Cross and Torch,
Where pestilences pale, where fevers scorch.

O Thou Immortal Nazarene! I know
Why Thou didst leave Thy village long ago;
Thou too, O martyred Son of God! didst hear
World-voices calling—calling loud and clear.
How sweet Thy days in that serene abode!—
To shoulder nothing but the pleasant load

Of doing well Thy work: to have the care
Of widowed mother; and Thy bosom bare
To God's eternal message in new guise—
Distasteful to the proud and worldly-wise.

But Thou the lotus-eater's ease didst shun,
A moral scheme Thy perfect manhood won;
Free from all bias and provincial trace,
Thy magnanimity espoused a race!
So sensitive Thy soul to things divine,
That inward blessedness was ever Thine;
And so diaphanous Thy mortal frame,
That men beheld within the Quenchless Flame.
When storms of persecution o'er Thee tore,
Thy heart had gladness at its very core;
Such things may mar the worldling's petty plan,
They could not frustrate Thine, O Son of Man!
On dismal days Thy spirit did rejoice—
Thou wert intrenched within Thy godlike choice.

VII.

Rabboni, when Thy love was spurned
By those who sought Thy death,
Oh, wert Thou sorry Thou hadst turned
Thy back on Nazareth?

When Thou wert face to face with ills
In proud Jerusalem,
Oh, didst Thou miss Thy native hills?
The peace that haunted them?

When persecutions, pains, and tears
Were Thy apportioned share,
Didst Thou wish back the silent years
That knew no sad world-care?

Oh, no; for all Thy youthful dreams
In miracles did merge,
Just as the musical hill-streams
Make up the ocean-surge.

There's naught worth while, for man or God,
But altruistic Good,
What lifts a man above a clod
Is Christian Brotherhood.

And this is heaven that knows no ban—
That we serve others well;
A bridgeless chasm 'tween man and man
Is—veritable hell.

The voices are, O Master mine!
In Thee personified,
They are Thyself, and are divine,
Their import is world-wide.

Thy message comes to us to-day
Couched in one phrase concise—
To make Thy choice, and Thee obey,
Is perfect paradise.

Aunt Lucy.

STRANGE thoughts have come to me of late,
Thoughts of an aged man,
The friends of youth, the good and great,
Have covered life's brief span;
My father went at seventy-five,
Now I am seventy-three,
The messenger will soon arrive
To set my spirit free.

No, no, my friend, I have no fear—
No fear of death's sharp sting;
For most of those I counted dear,
Now with the angels sing;
The thought of death does not appall,
I'm longing for my rest,
It seems as if I hear them call—
Those friends that loved me best.

You knew "Aunt Lucy?" Yes, of course,
All knew her by that name,
The children thought she was the source
Of all the good that came;
I guess all loved her pretty well,
And, now that she is gone,
I might as well her love-tale tell;
For hers and mine are one.

No one surmised we had our love,
Or rather, I had mine,
But fifty years, and more, I strove
To quench the spark divine;
And once I did my love declare,
But neither "Yea" nor "Nay"
I got from that dear soul so rare,
Just this, "I hope, some day."

You see,—she meant it on this wise,—
She could not play a part,
She'd wait until love's tide would rise,
Submerging all her heart;
She'd wait until her love grew strong,
Would then give her consent:
I could not tell her she was wrong,
Although my heart was rent.

Lyrics of the Fields.

'Twas fifty years ago, and more,
When we were young and gay,
Resignedly my cross I bore,
But saw her every day;
We kept our pleasant friendship up,
'Twas pure, without alloy,
And yet, I prayed that God my cup
Would fill with greater joy.

Steadfast I kept, silent and dumb,
It seems, perhaps, absurd,
I thought she'd speak, if love had come,
Would speak the sweetest word;
From year to year I watched her face,
To me no face so true,
And thought I saw there greater grace
Just as she older grew.

Alone "Aunt Lucy" spent her time,
Except as friends dropped in,
But let me tell you, in her prime
A bride she could have been;
She did not have to live alone,
Alone to face the strife,
My heart she could have made her throne,
She could have been my wife!

The years sped on; we both grew old;
I helped her all I could,
I did her chores, when days were cold,
And carried in her wood;
She proved to me a faithful friend,
Last week she slipped away,
To where she lies my way I wend,
These flowers thereon to lay.

Lyrics of the Fields.

When she approached the shadow-land,
I knelt beside her bed,
And, as I held her thin white hand,
These were the words she said:
"I thank thee for thy loyal heart,
The Master calls me home,
I want to say, ere I depart,
My love for thee has come!"

You know in Holy Writ 'tis said
They are like angels fair,
They love, but never do they wed,
Or give in marriage there;
Such was our love right here on earth,
A comradeship divine,
A friendship of eternal worth,
Of life—the very wine!

How oft I entertained the hope,
And supplicated God
That He would let me homeward grope
Ere she lay 'neath the sod!
Shorter and shorter grows my breath,
My days are getting few,
But this will cheer my soul in death—
To know her love was true!

When Buckwheat Blooms.

LATE-SUMMER softness shows the sky,
And restful vistas greet the eye,
Now Nature's shuttles slowly ply
Across her looms;
The farmer loiters leisurely,
He hails and talks with passers-by;
For garnered are the oats and rye,
When buckwheat blooms.

Lyrics of the Fields.

There's premonition of a sigh
Among the leaves and grasses high,
Because the time is drawing nigh—
 They reach their tombs;
Spring fledgelings now have wings to fly,
The squirrels yet are not so shy,
Their haunts are free from sportsmen sly,
 When buckwheat blooms.

Both brain and body are awry,
We fail to work, although we try,
We cannot brook the city's cry,
 Where traffic booms;
Right hopefully away we hie
To sylvan haunts, so brown and dry,
And there the livelong day we lie,
 When buckwheat blooms.

Sweet Nature, as our best ally,
Provides us with a fresh supply
Of vital forces to defy
 Impending dooms;
She now is mixing up her dye,
To do her painting by-and-by,
On her for vigor we rely,
 When buckwheat blooms.

The brainy bees are wondrous spry,
From bloom to bloom they lightly fly,
The ambient air they dulcify,
 And Love presumes
'Tis sweet to woo beneath this sky,
Mellifluent is her reply,
"I do not know a reason why
We should not marry—you and I—
 When buckwheat blooms."

Brimful of lovelight is her eye,
And loving eyes can never lie,
However much they want to try,
 When buckwheat blooms;
We promise each with each to vie
In loving ways until we die,
And seal our vows by marriage tie,
Beneath this soft late-August sky—
 When buckwheat blooms.

Outward Bound.

CAN it be true, O Sea! O Sea!
 So many years have fled
Into a vaster Sea than thee,
 And are forever dead,—
Since thou didst rock my fragile form
 On thy majestic breast,
And I first sighted, through the storm,
 The wonders of the west?

Thy spell, O Sea! was on my soul,
 Creating childhood's schemes,
Thy constant mystic murmur stole
 Through my diurnal dreams;
And, like all messages divine,
 Thine grew distinct with years,
For me thou didst my path define,
 And didst dispel my fears.

When I was but a barefoot boy,
 Disporting on the strand,
At shout of sailors' "Ship ahoy,"
 How would my heart expand!

'Twas thy incantatory song,
Thy fascinating foam,
That nourished my desire strong
On distant shores to roam.

Thou hast been called a tyrant proud,
To man a fatal foe,
Insidious when thy voice is loud,
And when thy lilt is low;
'Tis said thy heart is bent on pelf,
Ignoring those that weep,
As obdurate as Death himself,
They say, art thou, O Deep.

But fisher-folk, who know thee best,
Their nets securely fling,
And, as they mount thy heaving crest,
Right merrily they sing;
They love thee well when thou dost rave,
And when thy face is mild;
For thou dost teach them to be brave
For love of wife and child.

Methinks thy heart is quite forlorn
For lives crushed out in thee,
I've heard thee oft, in dirges, mourn,
O sympathetic Sea!
There's none like thee to heal my grief,
Save Him—Whose child thou art,
Thy azure depths impart relief
And healing to my heart.

I do not wish to see the time
When there shall be no sea,
Nor would I care to reach heaven's clime,
If forced that stern decree;

A constant, true, auspicious friend
In thee I've always found,
I want thy solace to the end,
As I am outward bound.

Perhaps we both are outward bound!
Persistent in our quest,
Until at last we shall redound
Back to our Father's breast;
Our agitations then should cease,
Should we behold His face,
On which is writ eternal peace,
Unfailing light and grace.

Incarnate Love! Thou art my Sea,
A mariner am I,
Seeking profounder depths in Thee,
As seasons swiftly fly;
The tides are driving high and fast,
The breeze is in my sail,
Soon I shall have the anchor cast
In Thee—within the veil!

Though outward bound, I have no fear,
The voyage is so fair,
The bending heavens are blue and clear,
There's tonic in the air!
A mystic, iridescent hue
Plays ever on my Sea,
I know, I know my Sea is true—
I love His mystery!

A Leaf from an Old Diary.

TO-DAY—the first of merry May,
I labored in the upland lane,
And who, think you, should come along,
But lissom lassie Jane!

Jane is a teacher in our school,
Her eyes are large, and brown, and mild,
Her voice is marvellously sweet:
She's loved by every child.

Awhile I rested on my spade,
Of cowslip-covered fields we spoke,
Of neighbors, and of sweet spring days,—
We parted with a joke.

When Jane was gone, I set to work—
To crush the stones, to dig the ditch,
But somehow Jane was in my thoughts,
As if she were a witch.

The blithesome birds about me sang,
They flew and fed their offspring dear,
But, strange to say, upon the breeze
The voice of Jane I'd hear!

By some strange impulse, I confess,
I did a thing unwise and rash:
My name and hers I neatly carved
Upon a sapling ash.

Anon our doctor came posthaste,
He simply passed the time of day,
I hurriedly unlatched the gate:
He rode a dapple-gray.

Lyrics of the Fields.

To-night I learned the reason why
He rode for all his steed was worth:
A cotter's wife, upon the moor,
To female twins gave birth.

Returning from my mid-day meal,
I found some feathers in my walk,
Blood had been shed, I knew it was
A murder by a hawk.

The parent birds were wild with grief,
They filled the willow grove with woe,
I tried my best their pain to heal,
I cursed their cruel foe.

At three a funeral passed through,
I stood aside, and bared my head,
Borne on the shoulders of his friends,
A lusty man lay dead!

Yes, dead and buried, in the spring!
Beneath this May-Day's dome of blue;
His wife and children shook with grief,
Alas! what will they do?

As model farmer John was known,
This spring he plowed the hillside steep,
And hopefully he sowed the grain:
The crops shall others reap!

At quitting-time, and who should come
Upon the scene but jolly Jane,
I blurted out, "How would you like
A cottage in this lane?"

Lyrics of the Fields.

Down through the upland lane we walked
Until we reached the young ash-tree;
She saw our names, and said, "Right here
Let our wee cottage be."

Our nuptials, in the parish Church,
Will be next month—in lovely June!
Just think! sweet Jane to be my bride!
O bridal month! come soon!

.

The bride of Death was Jane in June!
Oh, ne'er had he a prettier bride!
Schoolchildren buried her in flowers,
The parish sobbed and sighed!

In May and June of every year,
The sapling ash—now grown a tree—
Inquires, "Oh, what about the house
You meant to build by me?"

Morning Fields.

O MORNING fields! O morning fields!
What makes your faces wet?
Have you been weeping in the night?
Has aught caused you to fret?
It seems to me there's something wrong,
Oh, has the night been dark and long?

O morning fields! O morning fields!
Do not be overcast,
Aurora fair is on the way,
The east is reddening fast;
I wait with you the coming change,
While o'er us creeps a glory strange!

Lyrics of the Fields.

O morning fields! O morning fields!
 You are no more forlorn,
The red-faced sun is o'er the rim,
 A vernal day is born!
Your pearly faces fairly shine,
O morning fields—you are divine!

O morning fields! O morning fields!
 Your breath is fragrant, soft,
And musical are streams and woods,
 The skylark sings aloft;
And now the songsters of the grove
Fly forth for food in fields they love.

O morning fields! O morning fields!
 The world is all agog,
And from the vales to heaven ascends
 The incense of the fog;
The smoke surmounts the morning air,
And man resumes his daily care.

O morning fields! O morning fields!
 I grasp your friendly hand,
With joy we come—my team and I—
 To till the mellow land;
And with me comes my little child
To gather pink-tipped daisies wild.

O morning fields! O morning fields!
 I deem you sacred soil;
For others won you from the waste:
 I joy to add my toil;
And may my plow, O morning fields!
Contribute to increase your yields.

Asleep.

AS sleepest thou, sweet mother Earth,
Between two summers' glory,
Thy heart-beats slow, and free from mirth,
Thy garb so stiff and hoary;
So sleep ye souls we reckon dead,
A multitude in number!
Oblivious of all care and dread,
'Tween earth and heaven ye slumber.

As sleeps the seed in winter-time,
Its sleep that seems eternal,
Held prisoner by the frost and rime
Till blow the breezes vernal;
So, disembodied souls, rest ye,
In Hades-depths enfolded,
Till Spring supernal sets you free,
And ye anew are molded,

As sleeps the toiler in the night
That spans his days and morrows,
His senses shut to things of sight,
He drowns in dreams his sorrows;
So rest ye through the night of death,
Ye all whose day is ended,
Ye are not dead, ye have your breath,
Ye sleep—where souls are mended.

E'en Thou, the Savior of us all,
Didst sojourn with the sleepers,
The earth a sympathetic pall
O'erspread; strong men were weepers;

In sleep Thou didst Thy strength regain
To finish man's salvation,
For evermore Thou wilt remain
Our Hope and Consolation.

We know not where those regions are—
Where sleep laves off pollution,
But be they near, or be they far,
Love will prevent intrusion;
As vernal suns dissolve the snow,
And quicken every creature,
We trust Thy love will perfect so
In us each faulty feature.

As foregleams of the dawn increase,
They give the shadows warning;
So we interpret Thy release
As herald of our morning;
O Guardian of all souls asleep!
They will not be forsaken,
The keys of Sheol Thou dost keep—
The sleepers Thou wilt waken.

A Sailor's Grave.

WHAT grander grave a mariner can wish
Than the vast briny Deep!
The incantation of its ceaseless swish
To make profound his sleep;
To have an amaranthine sheet of green
For his unrotted shroud,
Thus to escape a tomb whereon is seen
A name by curious crowd.

The Heart of God.

I.

I PRAYED that I might see
The heart of God!
His answer came to me,
“Wilt thou accept the rod?”

But still I would indite
My prayer precise,
God asked, “And art thou quite
Prepared to pay the price?”

II.

Said God: “I do esteem
Thy early-cherished dream,
But wilt thou tread the path
Some call, ‘the road of wrath’?
It’s rugged, steep, and long,
But ends in home and song;
And wilt thou drink the cup
Such prayer as thine holds up
To lips that pray to see
The heart of Mystery?”

III.

I answered unto God: “Thy laws,
If Thou wilt help me, I’ll obey,
I’ll shun the easy path that draws
The soul astray.

“Grant me to see Thy heart, O God!
Or I am lost;
The upward road to Thee I’ll plod,
At any cost.”

IV.

Duty accosted me:
"Do my behest,
Sentiment, if it be
Within they breast,
Stifle, think not of ease,
Covet not pelf;
Youth, me thou hast to please,
And not thyself."

Philanthropy thus spoke:
"Man, to thy kind
Be like a mighty oak—
To break the wind;
Have pity on the frail,
Their rights defend,
Be deaf to no one's wail,
Orphans befriend."

Pain racked my fragile frame,
I was brought low,
Feebly flickered life's flame,
Barely a glow;
Oh! on this sentient clay,
Sharp was Pain's prong,
Oh! the dolorous way
Was parched and long.

Sorrow benumbed my brain
When came the Thief,
The fountain of the main
Gushed forth in grief;
A cataclysmal wave
O'er my life tore,
That left a grassless grave
Beside my door.

V.

There was a time I wove,
Thread after thread,
Fine arguments to prove
The Godhead.

Through labyrinthine ways
Of abstract thought,
For many nights and days,
God I sought.

I found Him not until
I lived His life,
The doing of His will
Banished strife.

Now when such questionings
I hear, I say:
"You'll find the Heart of things—
Some dark day."

VI.

O Nazarene! O Nazarene!
Thou art the Heart of God,
Revealed the Heart of the Unseen
Since Thou the earth hast trod;
O heart of mine! art thou quite free
From thy besetting sin?
O Heart of God! grant me to see
Thy lineaments within.

Sir Lewis Morris.

FULL well I know and love the country-seat
Upon the hill by old Carmarthen town,
Where zephyrs cool attempered summer heat
For Lewis Morris, poet of renown;
His well-built form—a massive brow it bore,
And face with dreamful eyes—ofttimes I saw
In lanes or in his grounds; for he was more
Enamored of the Muse than of the Law.

The sovereign singer of poetic Wales,
Who sang the "Songs of Two Worlds," forth has fled
To Hades-realms and blest Elysian vales—
Sir Lewis Morris sojourns with the dead!
His spirit is immortal bards among,
The "Ode of Life" is his absorbing theme,
In paradise he sings his "Songs Unsung,"
His genius grows in grandeur—gleam on gleam.

Upon another loftier, lovelier height
That views the vale, within a churchyard quaint,
The mold transmutes to objects of delight
All that is mortal of the scholar-saint;
Should Providence be kind, I promise me
To wend my way, some holy morn or eve,
To that loved spot, through lane and daisied lea,
And o'er his grave recite his "Gwen,"—and grieve!

Dead Music.

THERE'S a music that has vanished—
The sweet music of the flail;
The performers too are banished—
Their departure I bewail!

When Fields are White.

I LOVE the fields when garbed in green,
And summer reigns,
I love them when suave autumn's sheen
Is on the grains;
Again I feel a new delight,
When winter rules, and fields are white

I love the silent solitudes
Of pines and elms,
I love to walk in winter woods
And sylvan realms;
I love the splendors of the night—
When shines the moon, and fields are white.

I love the sting of snow and sleet
Upon my cheek,
I love the birds and beasts to greet
Along the creek;
My spirit is enamored quite
Of mother Earth, when fields are white.

I think the heart is more humane
When days are cold,
When snow in drifts lies in the lane,
And on the wold;
'Tis then we make the barn-door tight,
Increase the dole,—when fields are white.

When frozen are the mountain brooks,
Songless the groves,
My friendship I renew with books—
My winter-loves;
And in the gloaming, ere the light
Is brought, I dream!—when fields are white.

Lyrics of the Fields.

Oh, yes, I dream!—dream of the friends
Of long ago,
And wonder if the matter ends
Beneath the snow!
Black Death! most hideous is thy sight
In winter-time, when fields are white.
But, heart of mine, what does it mean—
This mystic mirth?
Can it be safe for faith to lean
On Jesus' birth?
Immortal life was brought to light
By Him Who came when fields were white!

At the Bend of the River.

AT the bend of the river—when the day is young!
The waters are singing a lively lay,
And the spray o'er the banks is so furiously flung—
Oh, the river demands her own sweet way.

At the bend of the river—when the day is old!
The waters are lilting a quiet psalm,
Neither angry are they, nor unbearably bold—
Oh, the river is restful, kind, and calm.

Father and Child.

GOD is a Spirit—so is man,
In realms of mind and heart we meet,
Our Father is no partizan,
All men are children at His feet;
The sage, with higher things in tune,
May soar with Him to suns and stars;
With Him the rustic may commune
In clover fields, on sandy bars.

Moonlight.

THE full-orbed moon of mid-July
The fields is flooding with her gold,
Beneath her magic, far and nigh,
A-dreaming lies each farm and fold;
Through moonlit lanes we wend our way,
Stones are like nuggets at our feet,
The air is redolent of hay,
Moon-glory gilds the whitening wheat.

The silent land lies in a swoon,
The sun-scorched scarps indulge in dreams,
This night the mild maternal moon
Anoints them with her balmy beams;
The fallow fields, beyond the brake,
In yellow vesture are arrayed,
Nowhere is felt a throb or ache,
The heat of day is now allayed.

The lunar splendor fair, divine,
Envelopes e'en the loathsome toad,
Recumbent are the docile kine
In dewy pastures by the road;
A mystic sorcery pervades
The dimly-lighted wooded glens,
The mellow moonlight garbs the glades,
And ghostly rushes of the fens.

We reach God's acre! By the gate,
He spends his teens within the mold,
By light of moon we read the date,
On monolith the tale is told;

Though mournful yews make shadows drear,
The moon is bright—she bathes his bed,
Oh, softer still her radiance here,
The moon is mindful of the dead!

We leave the consecrated ground,
Our firstborn boy is sound asleep,
The moon keeps watch o'er every mound
Till dawn arrives,—in hope we weep!
I turn to her whom God me gave,
I marvel at her growth in grace:
Ah me! it takes a moonlit grave
To glorify a mother's face!

Shelley.

O SHELLEY! in Oxford thy dark-brown locks
I saw,—thy primer, and thy watch-and-chain,
Thy sketch of house-and-sea-and-ship-and-rocks,
A page of thy "Dejection," penned so plain;
That famed guitar thou gavest to thy friend,
Thy face and Mary's by an artist wrought,
The Sophocles hand-clutched when came thy end,
And in a bookstore there thy "Soul" I bought!

Joy.

A glad-faced Angel saileth
Aboard my life-bark frail,
When mounting is the sea-swell,
And moaning is the gale,—
He sings—he can interpret
The fury of the foam—
"The bowsprit will make sooner
The harbor bar of home!"

Yule-Tide Musings of a Priest.

AT such a time as this, when pleasant days of Yule
Irradiate peace, and parents kind adorn
Their homes to welcome children's glad return from school,—
I dream me of a child—a child unborn!

When broods the spirit of the Child upon the earth,
When now diviner seem both eve and morn,
And when adults join in the universal mirth,—
Somehow, I think me of a child unborn!

When weary shoppers reach their homes, with loads of toys,
And furtive glances secrets signify,
When loving children fail to hide their gifts and joys,—
I wish that unborn child was somewhere nigh!

And when at last the joys of Yule are at their height,
And shining are the stars of Christmas Eve,
When little ones are almost frantic with delight,—
Oh, for a little child unborn I grieve!

When absent from the fireside fold is one wee lamb,
And when this Christmas is not quite the same,
Because none of the presents bear his monogram,—
I think me of a child that never came!

When children frolic round the lighted Christmas Tree,
And youthful hearts just brimful are of bliss,
When through the house reverberates infectious glee,—
There is a child—unborn—I wish to kiss!

When I officiate in the early morning mass,
And to the Child on altars incense burns,
And when I give my blessing to each lad and lass,—
For one unblest—unborn—my spirit yearns!

Lyrics of the Fields.

When children on the street their kindness reveal,
And when, all wreathed in smiles their faces fresh,
They sidle up to me,—my nature craves to feel
The pressure of a hand—unformed in flesh!

I murmur not. God put me in this office high,
He called me to proclaim His love and grace;
I have been blest with children's love,—and yet I sigh,
Sometimes, for one unborn—an unseen face!

Meridian is long past; the almond tree's abloom,
Nor kith nor kin I have; I am alone!
Faith falters not,—but oh! that in the gathering gloom
A cherub-child might be—my very own!

Marriage.

UNDER orange-blossoms white,
Two glad streams,
On a summer morning bright,
Join their dreams.

Pain.

THERE is a sculptor hard at work
On brawn and brain,
Sharp is his chisel as a dirk—
His name is Pain.

Post Mortem.

I.

DID you e'er dream that you were dead?
And did you see the concourse dread?
Around your bier both friend and foe
In copious tears commix their woe?
They clothed your life in heavenly grace,
As they surveyed your wan, pale face,
And said they had misunderstood
The claims of human brotherhood.
All this they said in your defence,
And then they brought their frankincense
That filled the house with odor sweet,
But you weren't there the friends to greet,
The fragrance you did not inhale,
On deaf ears fell their woeful wail,
Naught was there but your house of clay,
The tenant—you—had fled away.

II.

When we are dead, is God as kind
As mortals to our faults are blind?
And does our Father love us more
When we have reached the other shore?
And do our souls to Him then seem
Of greater worth? of more esteem?
For unto men, when we are dead,
An aureole bright surrounds the head.
Why should I fear? Perchance my death
Will change to praise the cruel breath;
My death men's dormant love will wake,
A kindlier view of me they'll take,
In me they'll think of what was best,
While God will put me with the Blest,
But I shall be the none more true,
What makes the change is—point of view.

"This Do in Remembrance of Me."

I.

ATHWART the flowery fields of Palestine
The mystic twilight moves. The Shepherd Good,
With Him His timid flock, the city seeks.
He leaves for good the fields where He had preached
His parabolic lyrics of God's love.
With sadness inexpressible He views
Gethsemane and Olivet—His haunts
For fellowship with Nature and with God.
Bethany's hospitality sincere
Can hold no longer the celestial Guest.
Chill grows the breeze on barren heights, and birds
Night-shelter seek among the olive boughs
Of Kedron's murmurous vale. The countryside
Is all astir, preparing for the Feast.
The pilgrims' tents are dotting all the hills,
And roads and paths with travellers are thronged.
The husbandman right early quits his tasks,
The dresser of the fragrant vernal vines
Bethinks him of the wines of other years.
In households happy mothers bake the bread
Unleavened; curious children questions ask.
High up the slopes the shepherds fold their flocks,
Among the hills reverberate the bleats
Of ewes robbed of their young. From abattoirs
The dying groans of paschal lambs are heard.
This night the Hebrew race looks backward, and
'Tis well Egyptian thrall it bears in mind,
And teaches children how its homes were saved
By Israel's God, in that avenging night,
With blood of lambs.

II.

Phenomenon most strange!
Simultaneously through the eastern gate
Type and fulfillment, both, their ingress make,
Unnecessary victims to false creeds.
The Lamb of God has visions strange this night:
Forward, as well as backward, gazes He;
For of the Dispensation Old He feels
Himself its Omega; and of the New
Its Alpha, for all races of mankind.
A priest He is, but is not serving blind
At flameless altars; visions of the seer
Sustain Him—of that realm of peace and love
That from man's mind shall never pass away.
He pities the sad fate of countless lambs,
Bewails the growing blindness of His race.
This night He feels the burden of men's sins
A crushing load; but loyal to the truth,
A spotless Lamb, and dumb, goes forth to death!
My Lord! why could not I have been a Jew,
A chosen member of that primal band?
Would God I had companioned Thee that eve,
On that Thy farewell walk as a free man!
Those very hours, the wolves were prowling sly
For Thee!

III.

The upper room, prepared, is reached:
Pallid is His cheek, pensive is His smile,
Marred is His visage by intense world-woes.
He met upon the streets cold looks, I fear;
And children too, perchance, smiled in His face.
His faithful John and Peter bid Him in,
They are alone with Him for further light;
Thus proving there are times we must forego

Domestic intercourse on our own hearths,
And shoulder His great Cause, sit at His feet,
Return thereafter, and be better men.
Oracular is His speech, pointed, grave,
And His example masterful, sublime,—
Giving His residue of strength to cleanse
The feet and eyes of stumblers in the way.
More searching still His words of wounded love,
As He portrays the traitor's heinous crime.
A threatening cloud envelopes Host and guests,
Sadness is present at the festal board,
And sin—its sting more venomous than e'er.
A Judgment scene in miniature we see—
Amid foul deeds, unsullied stands God's throne,
There is a Purity that naught can stain,
A Balance whose decisions are e'er true,
There is a Plumbline that can never lie,
A Breath that winnows worthless chaff from wheat.
In deep solemnity they then receive
The Sacrament at His behest, "This do."
His propaganda the eleven espouse,
And, lastly, in the upper chamber dim,
The stanzas of an ancient hymn they chant,
And out they go!

IV.

O fellow-mortal mine!—

Thou that hast not been in the upper room
With Jesus yet—oh, let me plead with thee!
Wilt thou not ponder well His final wish,
And out of thy abundance freely give
To Him of thy best love and staunch support?
Dost thou not know that, living out of Christ,
Thou art at variance with the Universe?
And that the Christ, Incarnate Moral Law,

Is the Criterion of the deeds of men?
What shouldst thou do, if one, who was thy friend,
Gave thee a keepsake, and the favor asked
That by the token thou shouldst think of him?
Shouldst thou be loath to gratify his wish?
And if thou knewest in the act thou wert
Deriving strength, and sharing in his bliss,
Shouldst thou not hasten to comply, my friend?
I know 'tis thy desire the right to do,
But, if omitting this, thou leavest out
The greatest help, and shunnest Christ's white breast.
Say not, "The upper room is filled with fraud,
The Judas-spirit vitiates the air."
'Tis not for thee to think of others' guilt,
But to remember Him. His presence will
Create more holiness than can a world
Of evil-minded men breathe forth of hate.
Look unto Him, and live His holy life.
He does not lay on thee a cruel creed,
Or any doctrine to the mind abstruse,
Or any dogma harsh,—He thrusts Himself
Upon the notice of a carnal world,
Nor dares the world ignore Him—and be right.
O friend! wilt thou not quit thy worldliness awhile,
And to the upper room betake thyself?
Thy many duties and thy worries leave,
And seek thee easement, ere it is too late,
On Jesus' bosom in the Eucharist.
God-ordered are thy tasks, I know; and ties
Of kinship and of friendship sacred are;
Legitimate are pleasures; wealth is good;—
But ware of Judas-mercenariness!
Put naught before the Christ. Religion is
Like sunshine on the landscape of our lives;
Life's day is ghastly pale and cold without

Lyrics of the Fields.

Religious sanctities to rose its hours.
The rich, in homes of cedar or of stone,
May dwell more wretched than the pious poor;
Possessions yield new meanings and new joys,
And poverty produces rustless gold,—
When we are Christly-minded through and through,
And Christ is all in all to us.

V.

I took
My First Communion at the age of twelve,
E'en then sin-stained my soul; but my young heart
Pulsated with devotion to my Lord.
I knew no wrath, His love was all to me—
His alabaster was the summer morn,
The tapers of the night His lovelight were,
He was beside me in the fields. He walked
With me on roads and paths. On harvest hills,
Among the flocks, He e'er companioned me.
I fled not to His altars in dismay,
By them I grew, a royal, priestly child,
I always lived within His realm of love,
I loved the beauty of the holy place,
I was enamored early of its peace;
Not a cathedral vast, high-domed—the place,
It was a chapel in a rural glen.
The worshippers were common people all,
Who long had looked upon the pulchritude
Of God, as 'tis revealed in Jesus' face,
That their own faces imaged forth His love.
Nor was the celebrant a prelate proud
In robes official; yet with unction served,
Worthy successor to the holy twelve.
Plain men the deacons were, who passed around
The symbols of His woe and of our hope,

Lyrics of the Fields.

With trembling hands, demeanor that declared
They stood beneath the Cross. The Christ was there!
His nail-scarred hands were seen by eyes of faith,
The saints, through joyful tears, beheld Him bear
Their sins away. The shades of eventide
Crept down the glen; the shelter of our homes
We sought, and on the way Christ's love we praised.
The twilight fields became a Holy Land,
The waiting brutes received caresses kind,
And farmsteads nestled 'neath God's wings.

VI.

Since then,
In many lands I have received and given
The sacramental symbols. Unto me
They have revealed vicarious suffering,
The universal law of sacrifice,
The heinousness of sin, God's quenchless love.
Immaculate Redeemer! Thou hast drawn
Much closer to me in these stronger years,
E'er dwelling in my heart, from childhood up,
Within its inner chambers now art Guest.
Thy patient love has mellowed my hard heart,
And I have closer drawn to erring souls,
In pitying love, and fellowship divine.
Of Thee I am unworthy, yet I come
To this mnemonic feast. Thou biddest me
Forget my brethren's failings, and my sins,—
Remember Thee, my perfect Passover!

Dusk.

THE Dusk is stealing my fair fields from me,
Dim grow the objects fond of my delight;
Beyond the cliffs nebulous looms the sea,
Abroad is the precursor of the night.

Stilled are all rural noises; past the rush
Of harvest-time, and reapers' merry din,
O'er stubble-fields prevails a deathlike hush,
The golden sheaves are timely gathered in.

The fields and I have long been faithful friends:
They gave me work, the worker's best reward—
Sweet sleep, and health, and God! It fairly rends
My soul to part from fields that I adored.

The fields have been inspirers of my songs,
Their witchery has made my bosom glad,
The tribute of my heart to them belongs,
Though glory to the fields it cannot add.

I see the landscape vanish, with regret,
Upon the fields, as 'twere a halfway shrine
'Tween earth and heaven, I and my Maker met,
And were co-workers whether rain or shine.

I miss them greatly! The calm smile of God
Upon their shining faces I beheld;
And, as my guided plowshare cut the sod,
All doubts of universal good were quelled.

Work is impossible now—day is done!
It is the hour for holy thought and rest;
If half-accomplished is my task begun,
O Savior! do not let me be unblest.

Lyrics of the Fields.

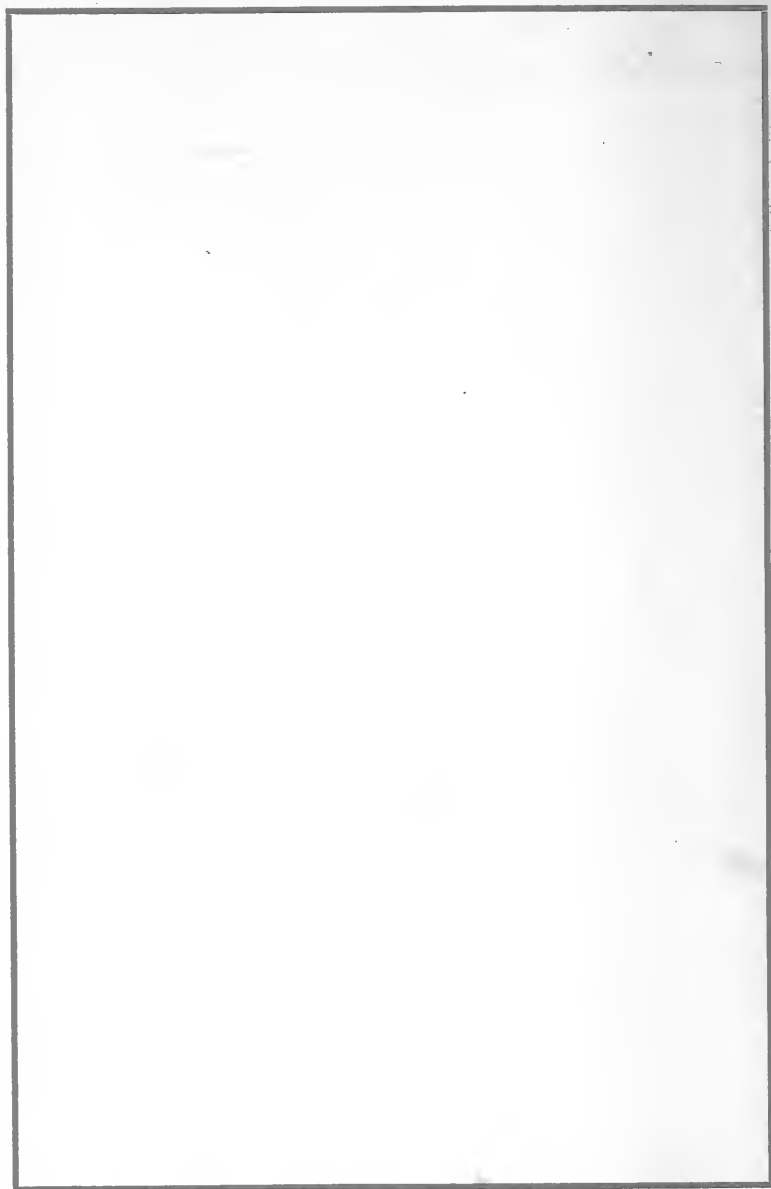
There is no moonlight, and no wind, no star;
I watch in my umbrageous rustic fane;
The wings of Dusk are spread both near and far,
Invisible the homestead in the lane.

Except the moaning of the darkening Deep,
No sound I hear; more labored is my breath;
And o'er me creeps the heaviness of sleep,
O God! and can this be the Dusk of death?

Dusk deepens into night! I go in peace
With the retreating light o'er lake and lawn;
The light, though here dislodged by Dusk's caprice,
Will on some other fields break into Dawn!









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